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Dear Parents,

Good day.

We have come to the end of Term 1. It has been a privilege partnering with you to grow your precious child. Please do use the upcoming March holidays to foster family bonding with your child through (1) participating in outdoor play, activities and sports, (2) exploring the neighbourhood and Singapore (or beyond if you are travelling outside Singapore), (3) encouraging your child to read a book, and/or (4) developing a hobby. We also hope that you will limit your child's screen time during this holiday break.

This is our second *Keeping in Touch with Parents*. I am grateful that some of you have reached out to me to share your thoughts and views, and I also want to thank all of you for taking time to read the subsequent story and my reflection.

#### Let me start with a short story:

It's a story about forgiveness, and a story of love. There was once a king who was well loved by his people. He was a good king, fair and honest. One day, he discovered that someone had been stealing from his treasury. Immediately, he told the people of his kingdom that the person who committed this crime would receive five lashes as a punishment. Another week went by, and nothing changed. The king, being very concerned and frustrated, announced that the punishment would now be raised to 10 lashes. This would be a painful sentence.

A few days later, the king found the culprit. It was his mother! His heart was broken. He knew what he had to do as the king, but his heart was heavy. Those around him told him to change the royal decree, and that he should not do this to his mother. However, he knew that as the king, he had to do what was right. He thus ordered his mother to be prepared for the lashing.

As the crowds looked on, his mother was tied between two posts. The executioner stood ready with his whip. Just as the executioner drew his arm back to strike the first lash upon his mother's back, the king shouted "Stop!" The whip stopped in mid-air. The king walked over to his mother, leaned into her back, wrapped his big arms around her with the biggest bear hug he could give her, and told the executioner to proceed with his task. The executioner told the king that he could not do that, to which the king replied, "I gave you an order. Proceed now!" And so, the executioner did.

#### My reflections:

##### The Power of Love

*When we truly love someone, we will go to any extent to protect him or her from danger.* From the story, we know that the king must have loved his mother a lot. He was willing to bear the pain from the lashing, and took the punishment meted out to address her mistake.

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**Vision** : Touching Souls, Challenging Minds

**Mission** : To maximise students' potential and develop in them a passion for life-long learning guided by compassion, conscience, purity and righteousness.

**Motto** : Compassion, Conscience, Purity, Righteousness

**愿景** : 净化心灵, 挑战思维

**使命** : 以校训慈、良、清、直为指引, 激发终身学习之热忱, 务必人尽其才。

**校训** : 慈、良、清、直

I know that every parent who is reading this story would do likewise to protect your child. Thank you for being there for your child – supporting his or her growth and development. However, it requires us to strike a balance between being over-protective and abusive, or showing a lack of care for his or her well-being and needs.

It takes two hands to clap. It will be helpful if we gather the facts and seek to understand, before we arrive at a conclusion or make a judgement. I would like to reconnect us to my earlier where I cited Minister Chan Chun Sing in Parliament on 4 Feb 2025, who acknowledged that parents can be anxious when their children are involved in fighting or hurtful behaviour, but they should let the schools handle these cases without speculating or stepping in to complicate the matters. I want to assure all parents that in our Mee Toh Family, we will act impartially in our students' best interests and guide them towards reconciliation and rehabilitation. There is no need to enlist external help that will complicate our investigation or our efforts to help our children learn from their mistakes and make amends to correct their actions and speech. Work with us directly to address the concerns that you have, and please also be patient with us as we do need time to conduct the investigation.

I must acknowledge that the school is not perfect, and our practices may, at times, have caused some inconvenience to your child and family. We appreciate your feedback, and we will do our best to safeguard the well-being and safety of our students. I seek your forgiveness if there are areas that we have not done well, but we will strive to do our best to improve the situation as we equally love your child. Your child is precious to everyone in our Mee Toh Family.

### **Our Hope**

A famous philosopher once said, "Anger is fire, which not only burns others but will also burn oneself to ashes. So, it is important to let anger go away and be forgiving." Many a time, we allow anger to control us and as such, we may say or do things that we may regret eventually. An error that has occurred cannot be rectified, just like the order from the king to increase the lashing for the culprit who stole from the treasury. Being an honourable king, he could not change his royal decree just to protect his mother. We may not have Control over what has passed. However, we can control the Present and even the Future. Why not make our Present better by doing good deeds, listening more with empathy, be more forgiving and cause less inconvenience or trouble to others?

Our young children will need time to acquire the right values and develop the right habits to do the right thing. Owing to impulsivity or a lack of responsible decision-making, our young children may choose to do the wrong thing and get into trouble. We were young before, and we also made mistakes when we failed to consider the consequence of a wrong action or speech. Let us work together to guide our children who need more time, patience and guidance to make responsible decisions that are anchored in values like respect, responsibility, care and harmony.

Thank you for your trust and support as we partner with you in your child's education journey in our Mee Toh Family.

Partnering with you,  
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