

# Thrive at E-Smart

November 2025

## From the Headmaster's Desk

Dear Parents,

If you have ever felt unappreciated by your child—met with an eye-roll after a special effort, a sigh at a chore request, or a complaint that a friend's gift was better—please know this is a universal experience. That sting is real, but it is crucial to understand that this behaviour is less a personal rejection of your love and more a common phase of development, deeply rooted in biology and the modern world.

The primary reason for this perceived ingratitude lies within the brain itself. The adolescent brain is a work in progress, and the prefrontal cortex—the command centre for judgment, impulse control, and long-term thinking—is the last part to fully mature. This means your child's brain is biologically wired to prioritize immediate social concerns and emotions over the reflective practice of gratitude. They are not being intentionally dismissive; their neurological focus is simply elsewhere, making it difficult to pause and appreciate the context of your efforts.

What is more, we are raising children in an age of instant gratification. With answers, entertainment, and social validation available at their fingertips, the vital connection between patience, effort, and appreciation can weaken. An entitled attitude often masks deeper anxieties about fitting in, academic pressure, or a simple struggle for identity. The complaint, "My phone is too slow for games!" is rarely about the phone; it is often a misplaced cry about social belonging or a bad day at school.

While this behaviour is a normal part of growing up, it is our role as parents to gently guide our children toward a genuine and enduring spirit of thankfulness. Here are five practical strategies to help cultivate this essential trait:

1. *Model gratitude explicitly and daily:* Let your children hear you express appreciation for the small, everyday things. Voice your thankfulness for a sunny day, a neighbour's kindness, or the meal you are sharing. This demonstrates that gratitude is the empowering lens through which to view the world, not merely a polite reaction to a gift.
2. *Create consistent rituals of appreciation:* Make space for gratitude to be a natural part of your family routine. This could be during dinner when each person shares one thing they are thankful for that day. This simple practice builds the "gratitude muscle" over time.
3. *Foster empathy through meaningful contribution:* Involve children in household chores and explain why their effort matters—"When you help clear the table, you allow us all to relax together sooner." Encourage them to

volunteer or help a neighbour. Understanding different life realities and contributing to the well-being of others is the most powerful antidote to entitlement.

4. *Practise confident and loving boundaries:* It is a natural impulse to want to give our children everything, but over-indulgence can dilute the value of what they receive. It is healthy to say "no" at times. This creates a sense of anticipation and makes the things they do receive feel truly earned and special.

5. *Connect with curiosity before correcting the behaviour:* In a moment of ungrateful behaviour, take a deep breath. Instead of reacting with anger, lead with empathy. A gentle inquiry like, "You seem frustrated. Can you help me understand what's going on?" can uncover the true emotional need beneath the ungrateful words, opening a dialogue and teaching vital emotional intelligence.

Please remember, you are not managing a problem; you are nurturing a person. The gratitude you are cultivating is a seed you plant today for a harvest you may not see tomorrow. Your consistent, patient, and loving efforts are building the indispensable foundation for a thoughtful, resilient, and appreciative adult.

Yours sincerely,



Clive Chan

## Stars of the Month

Cheng Chun Hei, Marcus  
Cheng Chun Him, Himson  
Cheung Hoi Huen, Leanne  
Chiu Yau Shing, Carson  
Chong Kayden  
Chow Wing Yan, Yulisa  
Chung Ka Ki, Tiana  
Hon Hei Yi, Haley  
Hon Hei Yi, Haley  
Ko Sum Yau, Zoe  
Ko Sum Yee, Yuki  
Lai Yi Kwan, Sophie  
Lee Sing Wai, Ella  
Leung Ching Hei, Theo  
Leung Pui Hin, Kenan  
Li Sheung Wing, Bernice  
Liu Yi Qi, Yuki  
Lui Hong Lam, Caitlyn  
Ng Chi Yin, Andy  
Poon Ka Ki, Andrew  
Poon Ka Ki, Andrew  
Ren Zi Qing, Annie  
So Chi Shun, Higgs  
Tsoi Hei Tong, Hazel  
Tsui Hei Tung, Aiden  
Woo Wai Kiu, QQ  
Yip Yu Shing, Bernie  
Yu Man Him, Nico  
Yuen Allison

IEK10B Sat 11:00-12:00  
WTE2B Fri 5:30-6:30  
IEK4A Sat 1:00-2:00  
WTE6B Fri 4:30-5:30  
WTE6B Wed 4:30-5:30  
IEK2B Mon 4:30-5:30  
WTE6B Sat 11:00-12:00  
WTE6B Sat 3:00-4:00  
GWF6B Sat 1:00-2:00  
IEK8A Sat 12:00-1:00  
PTW4 Sat 10:00-11:00  
WTE8A Sat 11:00-12:00  
WTE2A Sat 10:00-11:00  
WTE2B Sat 1:00-2:00  
WTE8B Fri 6:30-7:30  
WTE10A Thu 6:30-7:30  
GWF4B Fri 5:30-6:30  
WTE6A Sat 10:00-11:00  
GWF4A Sat 2:00-3:00  
WTE8B Sat 11:00-12:00  
GWF9A Wed 6:30-7:30  
IEK2A Wed 5:30-6:30  
WTE8A Thu 6:30-7:30  
PTWE1 Sat 10:00-11:00  
GWF6A Sat 2:00-3:00  
WTE4A Sat 3:00-4:00  
IEK6B Sat 12:00-1:00  
WTE4A Thu 4:30-5:30  
WTE4A Sat 10:00-11:00

Across the world, through different celebrations and events, November is a month of remembrance and respect. In Mexico, the 1st and 2nd of November mark the Day of the Dead. If you have seen the Disney/Pixar film Coco then you will know of this festival, in which families remember their ancestors and friends. Remembrance is also important to a number of countries on the 11th of November. The 11th of November marks the end of World War 1 but in many countries it has become a day to respect all soldiers who have fought during wartime. The Sunday closest to the 11th is known in some countries as Remembrance Sunday. In Hong Kong it is still observed. You might see someone wearing a red poppy or see the poppy wreaths presented beside the cenotaph located next to Statue Square in Central. It is important to remember and give thanks to those who gave their lives trying to help Hong Kong and its people. Thanks is also key in the American holiday Thanksgiving, in which families gather to give thanks and appreciation to each other and most importantly, show respect to others. Whatever you believe or celebrate, remember to respect others and remember those who have been here before us. The world has a rich tapestry of celebrations and events that should be respected and remembered.

~Mr Matthew

## CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL THE WRITERS OF NOVEMBER:

**Best Writer:** Aiden Tsui (6A) – Do I Dare To Be Different?

**Others writers:** Bernice Li (10A) – Are Art and Music Should be An Important Part at Schools?;

Higgs So (8A) Video Games Are A Waste Of Time; Emma Cheung (4B) A Cooking Competition;

Kayden Chong (6B) My First Day At School; Haley Hon (6B) An Adventure Story; Ling Yan Ho (6B) Is After-School Activities Good?

### Do I Dare To Be Different? – By Aiden Tsui (WTE6A)

I. M. Pei was successful because he dared to be different. This is what I've learnt from his story as well. Being creative and different are necessary for success.

First and foremost, being creative and different helps you stand out. If you do what others do, then you might not get noticed. However, if you're different from others, you may stand out more from other people owing to your uniqueness.

Secondly, being creative also helps you solve questions quickly and make new discoveries. For example, when other people see things fall onto the ground, they only think that it's normal. But Isaac Newton was different. When an apple fell onto his head, he thought of why the apple fell, and that's how he discovered gravity. This also applies to us. Thinking outside the box is also a key to success.

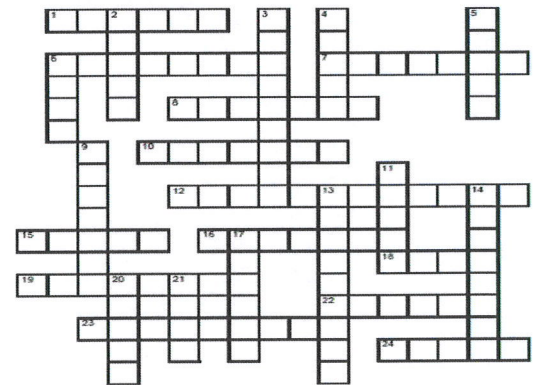
Last but not least, being different means you have the courage to go against the tide. In a world where conformity is the easier path, you forge your own and blaze a trail never seen before. That dedication will surely make you succeed in life.

In conclusion, we should embrace our own creativity without the fear of judgement. Sometimes, your path is the best path to take.



## I LOVE FALL

Acorn  
Apple  
Autumn  
Chestnut  
Cider  
Cobweb  
Fall  
Football  
Gourd  
Halloween  
Harvest  
Hay Bale  
Hayride  
Leaves  
Maize  
November  
Nuts  
October  
Pumpkin  
Quilt  
Rake  
Scarecrow  
September  
Sleet  
Thanksgiving



#### ACROSS

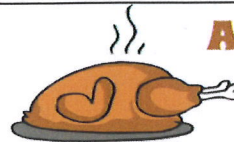
1. They fall from trees.
6. Popular autumn sport.
7. Jack-o-lantern gourd.
8. The 10th month of the year.
10. The gathering of crops.
12. The fourth Thursday in November.
15. Might be patchwork.
16. Seat at a square dance (two words).
18. Leaf gathering yard tool.
19. They are roasted on an open fire.
22. Halloween decoration made by a spider.
23. The 9th month of the year.
24. Decorative squash.

#### DOWN

2. Oak tree's fruit.
3. October 31st.
4. Honeycrisp.
5. Also known as corn.
6. The season that follows summer.
9. Fun activity on a farm.
11. Drink made from apples.
13. Used to keep birds off of crops.
14. The 11th month of the year.
17. Another word for the fall season.
20. Semi-frozen rain.
21. What squirrels often gather.



## A Thanksgiving Feast



**DIRECTIONS:** Find and circle the delicious Thanksgiving food in the grid. Look for the words in all directions including backwards and diagonally. What's your favorite Thanksgiving food?



GREEN BEANS  
MAC AND CHEESE  
MASHED POTATOES  
MINCEMEAT  
PEAS  
PECAN PIE  
PUMPKIN PIE  
ROLLS  
SQUASH  
STUFFING  
SWEET POTATOES  
TURKEY  
YAMS

APPLE PIE  
BISCUITS  
BRUSSEL SPROUTS  
CASSEROLE  
CHESTNUTS  
COLLARD GREENS  
CORN BREAD  
CRANBERRY SAUCE  
DRESSING  
GRAVY

