CALDERSTONES SCHOOL
A Specialist Science College

Headteacher: **Mr L Ratcliffe** B.A. (Hons), NPQH

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Dear students,

Many thanks again to those of you who submitted a response to the most recent 'Wider Thinking Challenge' of the year which I set as a homework task on Frog before the Christmas break. The question / scenario that you were asked to consider was:

You've probably all come across the question: "If a tree falls in a forest, does it make a noise if there is no-one there to hear it?" This used to puzzle me when I was young. I think there are different answers to this question and no real agreement on which is right. Scientists and philosophers would probably respond very differently.

I have a similar question for you. Initially, I think you'll think that it's straight-forward but I'm not so sure that it is. Give it some thought before you put pen to paper:

Is a "wrong" act okay if nobody ever knows about it?

The usual rules apply: produce a short written response to the above question. Responses should be no more than 250 words. They can be handed in to the main office in Quarry before the end of school on Friday 6th January and should have 'For the attention of Mr Ratcliffe' at the top of the page or on the envelope. Don't submit it via Frog – I won't be able to pick them up I'm afraid! As always, a prize will be available for the most interesting or perceptive response.

There were fewer responses on this occasion and I'm guessing that this may be because you all felt that the answer to this one was pretty straightforward, i.e. 'yes, it's wrong regardless of whether anyone else knows of it.' This perhaps proves what a moral lot you are because the verdict was clear in this sense. There is no right 'wrong act'. As always, some of my favourite extracts taken from some of your responses are listed below:

"The law is invisible but it's always there in a person's head. Something is wrong because my mind concludes that it's wrong as a result of my experience and knowledge."

"If you do something bad and then admit to it then it doesn't reverse the action."

"Even if the person you did it to (a wrong act) isn't affected, our conscience knows what it right or wrong … If everyone did something wrong and it was kept a secret, society would be chaotic and unsafe."

"Everyone has to do something bad to be human."

One of the most interesting takes on this (to me) randomly involved polar bears:

"If someone was to go to the North Pole and hunt polar bears and kill about twelve bears but nobody witnesses it or knows of it, that still has an impact that people don't realise."
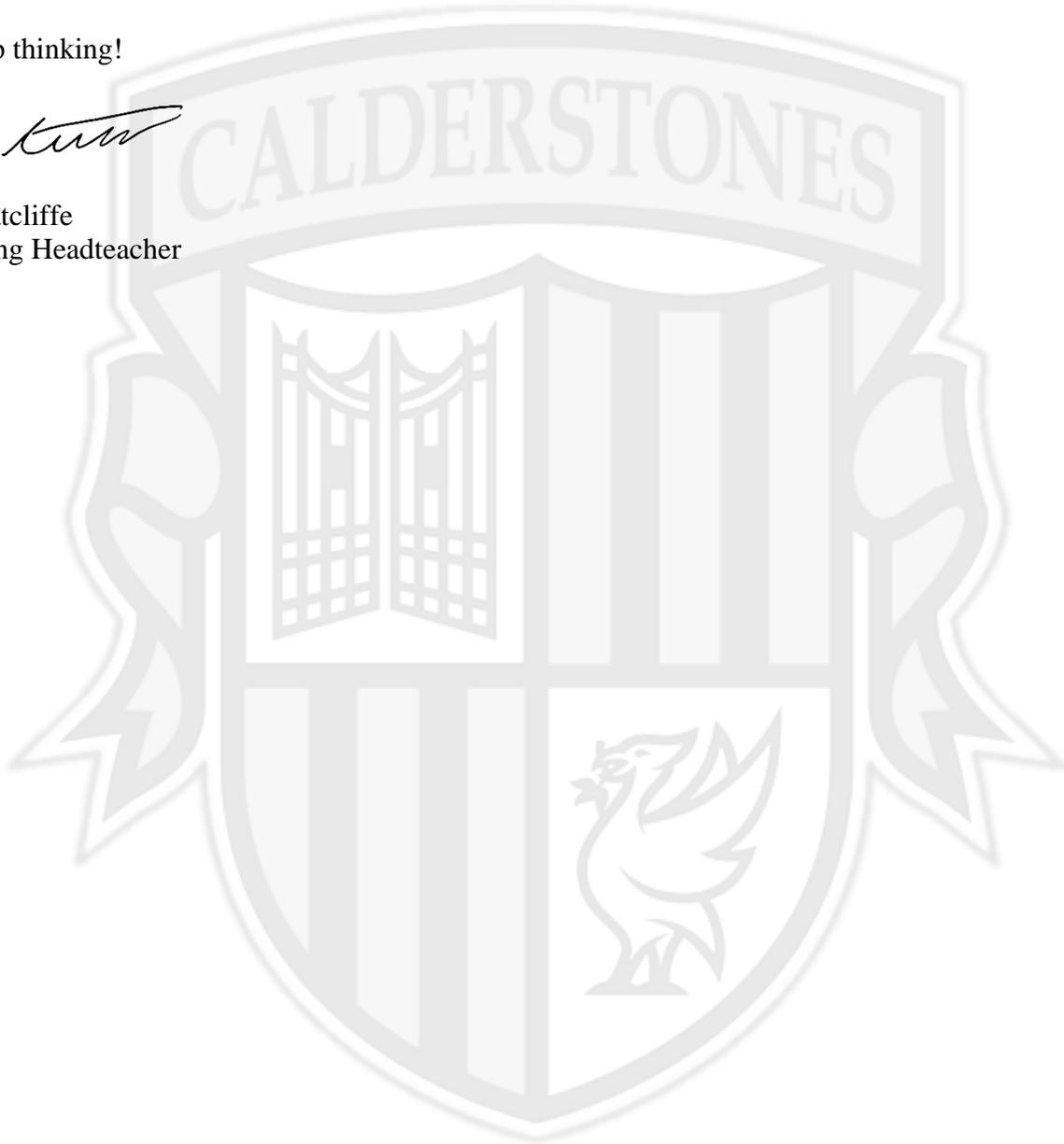
Once again, I had to select the response that impressed me the most. On this occasion, David Chacon's (Year 7) response seemed to be the most thoughtful and interesting. Well done David!

I'll set another 'Wider Thinking Question' soon so feel free to respond again, or if you didn't submit a response this time, have a go.

Keep thinking!

L Ratcliffe
Acting Headteacher