



Supporting Children after Terrorist Incidents

Jonny Timms, Deputy Head (Pastoral)

At the close of the first half of term, my message in the newsletter referred to how we can support children after the terrorist attacks. 10 days onwards, and whilst the threat level has been reduced, our country has experienced a second horrific incident in London Bridge on Saturday evening.

Like so many of us, I have tried to stay in touch with as much of the unfolding news around the tragedies as they have occurred, and follow with interest the reactions of the communities concerned, the wider press and subsequent publicity. With the wide age and range of children at Caldicott, we are really aware that their experiences are going to be very different. With some of our senior boys, we have engaged more directly with the events, and will continue to do because this is also all happening at the time of a general election, and the school community is very much embracing the opportunity to study the news and discuss the issues.

The younger the boy, the greater care we are taking, and we are sensitive that parents will need good information on how we are tackling these issues (if and when we do), so they can stay in step and work with us to allay fears and calm nerves. The BBC have provided good, immediate advice for schools and families, [here](#), which we have in use already, and as and when those that support our work provide further, more focussed advice, we'll share that too.

The leadership team are currently discussing further the ramifications of the events so far, our routines for safety and critical incidents, and checking our calendar activity to see if there are any forthcoming events we should cancel in the light of their proximity to areas of risk. We will write to all parents in due course if there are any changes from our deliberations and highlight any additional preventative measures we are putting in place to assist the school and community to feel safer.

Such has been the unexpected nature of the outrages we have seen this year so far, I don't feel it is our role to talk up the dangers alone. As Catherine Vale writes in the Guardian last Friday:

“Show them the good: Terror attacks are frightening, and the immediate aftermath can be confusing and overwhelming for young people. But where there is violence there is also good: emergency responders on the scene; civilians offering their homes to strangers; blood donors queuing up round the block; and taxi drivers offering free rides. Reminding young people of this can help alleviate students’ fear and put the events in perspective.”

And despite the ghastliness of the news, we can be inspired by those around us who have been able to make response already.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any further questions or queries about any of this.