

## **CAT Tests in Year 7**

You may be aware that Year 7 students are currently undertaking CAT4 tests this week. Below is some information to help explain why we use these tests and what they consist of.

### **What is CAT4?**

The Cognitive Abilities Test (CAT4) is a diagnostic assessment that is designed to help the school understand how each student learns and what their academic potential might be. It assesses how students think in areas that are known to make a difference to learning.

Tasks involve thinking about shapes and patterns (Non-Verbal Reasoning), words (Verbal Reasoning), numbers (Quantitative Reasoning) and some questions are answered by mentally generating and transforming visual images (Spatial Ability).

### **How are CAT4 results used?**

CAT4 provides teachers with information that can form the basis for discussions about how best a student can learn and reach his or her potential in school. Used with other information (such as results from Key Stage 2 SATs, for example), these data can support teaching and learning for all children.

### **Can students practice for CAT4?**

We strongly advise against any kind of practice ahead of a CAT4 test as this will alter the reliability of test scores. The point of CAT4 is that it is not a test of learnt knowledge and it needs to be as unaffected as possible by any external factors, such as practice.

CAT4 is a timed assessment and is administered under formal conditions. However, each section of the assessment includes introductory information with practice examples, and these will familiarise the children with the style and format of the questions. These sections are not timed and may be repeated.

### **Is additional time allowed for children with SEND?**

CAT4 is a timed assessment and additional time is not permitted as this will affect the reliability of the results. CAT4 is not just about what and how it tests but how the questions are answered within a set timeframe. The timed element makes it diagnostically very powerful.

Please contact me for more information if needed.

Yours sincerely