



October 7th 2021.

Dear Parent/Carer,

I am writing to inform you of the Cognitive Abilities Tests (CATs) which will be taking place the week beginning Monday 11<sup>th</sup> October 2021.

Our Year 8 students will be sitting three CATs (Cognitive Abilities Tests) instead of three of their timetabled lessons on allocated days. The tests will take place 'on line' in a computer room and the timetabled class teacher will be available to support the tests in exam conditions with senior staff. The tests will take 45 minutes each.

### **What is CAT4 and how do we use it?**

The Cognitive Abilities Test (CAT4) is a diagnostic assessment that is designed to help students and their teachers understand how they learn and what their academic potential might be. It assesses how students think in areas that are known to make a difference to learning. While many other tests focus on a child's attainment in core subjects, CAT4 is designed to give schools a much broader, more rounded view of each child, their potential and how they learn. Results help teachers decide about the pace of learning that is right for a student and whether additional support or challenge is needed.

CAT4 is based on years of research and development. It is a well-known assessment in schools; teachers value its ability to provide an understanding of what a child is capable of rather than defining them by their understanding of a body of knowledge in particular subjects. At Rhosnesni High School, the CAT4 tests will enable us to firstly set accurate individualised targets and secondly, it will enable us to target support towards every child to help them reach their full potential. 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). Other information, including teachers' own assessments, is very important. Results from CAT4 will be used in combination with a range of data to set targets for learning and identify any particular need, for example a need for support in literacy. As parents /carers you will be updated after the assessment so that you know how your child has performed and the school's plans, if any, for further follow-up. All aspects of the CAT4 tests will be discussed with Year 8 pupils prior to taking the tests. Please note that access arrangements such as extra time/a reader are not permissible in CATs.

**It is also important to emphasise that no preparation is necessary; your child must not become anxious about these tests as no pre-learning or knowledge is needed to complete them.**

If you have any further queries please do contact the school.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs S Williams

**Acting Deputy Headteacher**

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