

Dear Parent/Carer

Your child has just undertaken the *Cognitive Abilities Test (CAT)*. This is a suite of tests that assesses a student's reasoning abilities in key areas. The aim of testing is to illustrate potential, and identify strengths and areas where pupils may need support in the future.

**The Four Areas are:**

**Verbal Reasoning** - verbal classification and connections, sentence completion

**Quantitative (or Numerical) Reasoning** - number series and analogies

**Spatial Ability** - thinking with shapes

**Non-verbal Reasoning** - thinking with shape and space

Types of Questions in the Cat test

### Verbal Reasoning Battery – thinking with words

#### Verbal Classification

Three words are presented which are similar in some way or ways. From a selection of five possible answers, the student must identify a fourth word with similar properties.

E.g. rain, fog, sunshine .....

The answer is snow because rain, fog and sunshine are all types of weather and snow is also a type of weather.

#### Verbal Analogies

A pair of connected words is presented alongside a single word. From a selection of five possible answers, the student must select a word to complete the second pair in the same way.

### Quantitative (or Numerical) Reasoning Battery – thinking with numbers

#### Number Analogies

Two pairs of related numbers are presented. From a selection of five possible answers, the student must select a number to complete a third pair.

#### Number Series

A sequence of numbers created by a transformation rule is presented. From a selection of five possible answers, the student must identify the rule and continue the sequence.

### Non-verbal Reasoning Battery – thinking with shapes

#### Figure Classification

Three designs are presented which are similar in some way or ways. From a selection of five possible answers, the student must identify a fourth design with similar properties.

#### Figure Matrices

Designs are presented in a grid with one empty square and, from a selection of five possible answers, the student must identify the missing design.

### Spatial Ability Battery – thinking with shape and space

#### Figure Analysis

A series of diagrams shows a square being folded repeatedly, and then punched through with holes. From a selection of five possible answers, the student must identify how the paper will appear when unfolded.

#### Figure Recognition

Several complex designs are presented along with a single target shape. From a selection of five possible answers, the student must identify the target shape within one of the complex designs.

Here are some national (UK) statistics to help interpret the results for your child:

Description	Very low	Below Average		Average			Above average		Very high
		<74	74-81	82-88	89-96	97-103	104-111	112-118	
National (UK)	4%	7%	12%	17%	20%	17%	12%	7%	4%

Please note that performance on any one occasion can be affected by a number of factors such as mood, illness etc. Attitude, effort and good attendance can also mean that pupils achieve better academic results than S1 Cat scores may indicate. Abilities can be built upon and developed to improve outcomes. For example, verbal reasoning can be developed by supporting students' reading, comprehension and vocabulary.

School staff will use this data, along with data from PIM (Progress in Maths) and PIE (Progress in English) tests, taken in Primary 7, to track progress and set targets for your child. Cats tests can also help identify pupils who are underachieving.

Should you wish further information about your child's CAT tests, please contact either your child's Guidance teacher or Head of House.

Mrs Erica Macdonald  
Depute Rector