

September 2020



Dear Parent/Carer

We hope your child has enjoyed their first couple of weeks with us and is looking forward to the next 5, or hopefully 7, years with us. The Year 7s have certainly settled in quickly to new routines, different staff and some new subjects and we are very much enjoying getting to know them all.

As you know, our current Year 7 students did not sit the KS2 tests they would normally have done, due to school closures across the country in the summer term. These tests usually give us a really useful starting point about their ability in English and Maths, and along with our own baseline assessments in the various subjects, allow us to work out quickly where students might need extra help and what they are really good at already.

We are therefore going to be using a CAT (cognitive abilities test) assessment with all of Year 7 next week; some students may have done a primary CAT assessment previously at primary school. It is important to say that this is not something students should revise for; these are not tests of learnt knowledge and need to be as unaffected as possible by any external factors, such as practice. They are timed assessments with practice examples to familiarise students with the style and format.

The assessments are done on computers and students will complete it with their forms in computer rooms across one double and one single lesson next week. Students will be given full details of their day and room next week by form tutors. CAT assessments will help us as teachers understand how students learn best, help us choose appropriate pace for lessons and whether additional support or challenge is needed. The tasks themselves 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).

It is important to note that we will not use the results of CAT assessments in isolation in school – they are simply one tool we use to ensure the highest quality of teaching and learning in school, and that the needs of all students are being met. The assessments can also flag up potential learning needs which may require further investigation and intervention. They are absolutely nothing to worry about and please reassure your child of this.

if you have any questions, please don't hesitate to get in touch with me via email or phone.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'N Dixon'.

Ms N Dixon

Assistant Headteacher (Data, Assessment & Reporting)

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