

Larbert High School

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Falkirk Council
Children's Services

Rector: Jon Reid

31 August 2018

Dear Parent/Carer

S1 CAT Assessment

During the week beginning Monday 3 September, all of our S1 pupils at Larbert High School will undertake CAT4 (Cognitive Abilities Test).

The assessments are completed online and results will be used to help teachers plan the next steps in learning for each child in order to help them make the best possible progress, and also highlight any areas which may require some further support or intervention.

Pupils do not have to revise or prepare for the CAT4. These assessments are designed to be used as part of normal learning and teaching and the information they provide will be used in the same way as other assessment information, which arises from day to day classes/lessons.

The assessments are designed to be appropriate for use with all children, including those who require additional support.

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 class tests and SNSA), this data can support teaching and learning for all children.



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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 additional support needs?

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

Mr Stuart Law
Acting Principal Teacher of Performance Information



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