

8<sup>th</sup> September 2021



Dear Parent/Carer,

**RE: GL CAT4 Assessments**

I trust that your son or daughter has settled in well to life at St Michael's and has found the first few days at our school a reassuring and exciting experience. I am very impressed with the way in which our new Year 7 pupils have adapted to secondary school and look forward to taking the journey with them through to Year 11. The last two years have been disruptive to schooling to say the least, and I am, therefore, even more impressed with the start that Year 7 has made.

As you are already aware, due to Covid-19, SATs were cancelled this year. As a result of this, Year 7 students will be undertaking Cognitive Abilities Test (CAT4) on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> September 2021. We would like to reassure you that this is not something your child should worry about and no prior-learning or revision is needed. However, we do expect all students to treat this assessment seriously so that the results we obtain are as accurate as possible. This 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. Students will be required to wear headphones during the test, so it is advisable that they bring their own on the day of the assessment. The headphones must be wired with a jack connector so that they can be plugged into the device.

While many tests focus on a child's attainment in core subjects, CAT4 is designed to give the school 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. It will also allow us to set students challenging but reachable targets through Key Stage 3 and in turn monitor the progress that is being made.

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).

CAT4 is based on years of research and development. The current edition took five years to develop and the involvement of 25,000 students across the UK. 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. Practice materials and extra time will not be permitted during the tests.

If you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact me by email: [darren.howden@st-michaels.sandwell.sch.uk](mailto:darren.howden@st-michaels.sandwell.sch.uk).

Yours faithfully,

Mr Howden  
Head of Year 7

Headteacher: Mrs J Gray, MSc, NPQH

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