

Dear Parents & Carers,

Our Year 7 students will complete their CAT4 assessments over the course of the next week.

Each academic year we complete this set of three assessments with every Y7 cohort. Primarily it gives us an initial starting point for each student, beyond what the SATs assessments usually tell us. They also allow us to have better informed conversations around pathway option in Y9, when the time comes.

At the Macclesfield Academy, throughout Years 7 to 9, students are either in the A half of the year, or the B half. Both halves are of the same ability, allowing us to create a comprehensive timetable despite the small size of our school. It allows subjects the flexibility to set students (like in Maths) or teach mixed ability (as in English lessons). Each year half studies a different language, and therefore changing halves later in Key Stage 3 would create significant issues.

In a typical year, year halves would be allocated using SATs results. As this wasn't possible this year, we have initially done this using Y6 teacher judgements. We are confident that, as a result, we will not need to change many student timetables/classes. However, we will use the CAT4 assessments in order to verify this, and make changes now, at the start of Year 7, before they become irreversible later in Key Stage 3.

#### **What are the CAT4 assessments?**

These are a series of three 45-minute assessments completed on a computer, that assess students in four areas: verbal, non-verbal, spatial and quantitative reasoning.

Students cannot revise for these, nor would we want them to. We would like to see students take these assessments seriously, and to the best of their ability, giving us an accurate view of them as learners. Overly-preparing for these assessments would result in the academy missing vital information, or areas of strength/development, that would help us to give them a better learning experience.

Results are typically only shared with teachers and school leaders in order for the curriculum to be suitably adapted. It is not a pass/fail assessment, rather a diagnostic tool.

Should these assessments result in your child changing classes, we will contact you first to walk you through possible options, and reasons why. Any final decision is made with the individual student at the centre.

We hope this gives you all the information you need, however please feel free to contact either of us, using the email addresses below, if you have any further questions.

Yours,

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