



Wednesday 30th September 2026

Dear Year 6 Families,

Re: CATs Testing

This half term, your child will sit a series of short CATs (Cognitive Abilities Tests) which are used by Hackney secondary schools to band the Year 7 cohort into ability groups. The aim of the tests is to ensure that each school admits a wide range of children of different abilities.

Unlike national curriculum assessments (such as SATs), Cognitive Abilities Tests do not measure memorised knowledge or subject specific learning in subjects like English or Maths. Instead, they assess a child's underlying reasoning abilities and learning potential across four main areas:

- Verbal Reasoning: Thinking and problem-solving using words.
- Non-Verbal Reasoning: Problem-solving using visual patterns, shapes, and diagrams.
- Quantitative Reasoning: Working with numbers and mathematical relationships.
- Spatial Reasoning: Visualising and manipulating 3D shapes and space.

It is important to note that children do not need to not carry out revision for Cognitive Abilities Tests as these assessments measure natural reasoning preferences rather than memorised subjects or taught facts. At Grazebrook, we ensure children are introduced to the question types beforehand by their class teacher so that they know visually what to expect. There are no additional access arrangements available for these tests but children will be able to take a break between each section of the test and each section is short (10-15 minutes).

The CATs test will be completed by pupils on their pupil iPad and the tests will start on the week beginning Monday 12th October.

Next week, the children will be completing mock SATs. These will be used by the teachers to identify the knowledge which the children have securely retained from their Key Stage 2 learning journey and the areas of the English and Maths curriculum which need to be revisited. It will also help the teachers to identify any children who may benefit from access arrangements during the real tests and/or some additional practice sessions both within and outside of the school day during Autumn 2 and the Spring term. There is nothing for the children to be anxious about. They should see the mocks as a chance to get used to the papers so that when they sit their SATs in May, they will feel really confident.

If you have any questions regarding SATs or CATs, please feel free to ask your child's classteacher.

Best wishes,

Katie Beecroft
Headteacher