

September 2026

Dear Parent/Carer

We are writing to you with some important information but would firstly like to say how lovely it was to see our Year 7 students arrive at school today, excited to begin the next five years of their journey with us. We look forward to working in partnership with you as parents and carers to support your child throughout their time at our school.

At Appleton Academy, we are committed to helping every student achieve their full potential. As part of this commitment, we use a range of assessment tools to better understand students' strengths, learning needs and potential. To support this process, students in Year 7 will be completing the Cognitive Abilities Test (CATs).

CATs are a nationally recognised assessment that measures a student's reasoning abilities in four key areas. These assessments help us understand how your child learns and can provide valuable information to support their educational progress and attainment. The tests are not based on prior knowledge of the curriculum, so no preparation or revision is required and students do not need to feel anxious about these. Their tutor will talk them through the tests prior to the Year group starting them.

The information gained from CATs help teachers to:

- Identify individual strengths and areas for development.
- Plan learning and support more effectively.
- Set appropriate targets and expectations.
- Monitor progress and guide future academic pathways, including GCSE and post-16 studies.

Once the assessments have been completed, we will use the results to inform our planning and support for students. The results from CATs are not necessarily all that useful for parents but we will still share these with you, along with some information about what you might interpret from them. However, they will be used primarily by teachers and leaders in the school to target any further support or stretch for students. They will also provide us with a useful information that we can triangulate with the SATs data that has come through for your child.

If you have any questions or would like further information about CATs, please do not hesitate to contact the Academy.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Aderrington".

Mrs Alex Derrington
Deputy Headteacher – Secondary Achievement & Standards