



Coláiste Bríde

Templeshannon, Enniscorthy, Co. Wexford.



Coláiste Bríde *Guidance Counselling Department*

3rd February 2026

Cognitive Abilities Test (CAT)

Dear Parent/Guardian,

I am writing to let you know that your daughter/ward will have the opportunity to participate in **Cognitive Abilities Test Fourth Edition (CAT4)**, as part of the school's Guidance Programme. CAT4 assesses how well a participant **can think about tasks and solve problems using a range of different questions**. For further details please refer to the accompanying information sheets, *CAT4 - Question and Answers* and *Sample CAT4 Questions and Solutions*.

The CAT4 has been scheduled for **Transition Year students** to take place as follows:

Day and Date	Time	Venue
Thursday 12th February 2026	12:45-14:45	Sports Hall

If your daughter/ward **requires any accommodation** to participate effectively in the CAT4s, please **notify the Guidance Counsellor as soon as possible**. Furthermore, if, for any reason you would prefer your daughter/ward **not to participate in the test** please inform the school.

To prepare parents/guardians and students for CAT4 I am providing you and your daughter with:

- 1) **CAT4 - Questions & Answers Sheet**
- 2) **Sample CAT4 Questions & Solutions**

I encourage both you and your daughter/ward to **read this information before** CAT4 testing commences. Most questions should be answered and addressed in the accompanying material and I will also be around to each class to explain the procedure to students. However, if you have any additional queries, please do not hesitate to contact the school.

Yours sincerely,

Elaine McGinnity

(Guidance Counsellor)



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CAT4 - Questions & Answers Sheet

Parents/Guardians should **read this information in conjunction with their daughter/ward** to aid their understanding of what the CAT4s are and to assist them in preparing to partake in testing.

Question	Answer
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What does CAT4 stand for?	CAT4 stands for <i>Cognitive Abilities Test Fourth Edition</i> .
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What does CAT4 assess?	CAT4 assesses how well you can think about tasks and solve problems using a range of different questions . Some tasks involve thinking about shapes and patterns (Non-verbal Reasoning), some use words (Verbal Reasoning) or numbers (Quantitative Reasoning), and finally, some questions are answered by thinking about shape and space together and imagining a shape being changed and moving (Spatial Ability).
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Why do schools use CAT4?	CAT4 is used in many schools across Ireland to provide information to teachers that, teachers, students, and parents that, with other information, forms the basis for discussion about how best an individual can learn and reach her potential in school .
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Why should I participate in CAT4?	(1)The abilities tested in CAT4, such as spatial ability, may be difficult to demonstrate in the classroom so it is important that your teachers know the level of your ability in such areas. (2) CAT4 results will help your teachers decide about the pace of learning that is right for you and whether you need to be challenged or given additional support and in which areas of the curriculum.

	(3)CAT4, unlike an English or maths test, is not a test of what you have learned. It tests what you can do in areas that are known to make a difference to learning and achievement.
• Can I fail CAT4?	No! You cannot ‘fail’ CAT4s. Therefore, nobody should be worried/ anxious about participating in testing.
• Can, I prepare/study for CAT4?	No! You arrive on the day and simply do your best. CAT4 does not require any prior knowledge, and you cannot ‘learn’ how to answer the questions in CAT4. It is therefore a good test because everyone starts at the same place.
• How much does CAT4 cost?	Nothing! The school will pay for all material required for CAT4 (CAT4 books, answer sheets, corrections, etc.)
• When and where is CAT4 taking place?	CAT4 has been scheduled to take place in the Sports Hall from 12:05-14:45 on Thursday 13th February 2025 , for all Transition Year students . Students will have an opportunity to eat lunch before testing begins.
• What if I am absent for CAT4?	If you are absent on the day, you will miss out on participating in CAT4 as well as the educational assistance that the results may provide. Missing CAT4 is not the end of the world as there are other ways in which you are encouraged to be guided in relation to how best you can learn and reach your full potential (e.g., class tests, subject teacher feedback, etc.)
• How many tests are there in CAT4?	There are 8 tests in CAT4.
• What are the names of the tests and what does each test measure?	<p>CAT4 consists of a suite of tests that assess student’s reasoning (thinking) abilities in key areas that support educational development and academic attainment.</p> <p>CAT4 is comprised of the following sections (batteries) which assess different aspects of ability: 1) Verbal Reasoning Battery (i.e., thinking in words) 2) Quantitative (or Numerical) Reasoning Battery (i.e. thinking with numbers) 3) Non-verbal Reasoning Battery (i.e. thinking with shapes) 4) Spatial Ability Battery (i.e., thinking with shape and space.)</p> <p>Each of the 4 sections consists of 2 tests. For example, the ‘Verbal Reasoning Battery’ tests are titled (a) <i>Verbal Classification</i> and (b) <i>Verbal Analogies</i>, and so forth.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do I need to bring with me on the day? 	<p>Each student should bring an HB PENCIL (as long as the lead in the pencil is dark it's suitable), a pencil sharpener and an eraser. You must have your own stationery as no sharing allowed. Please note calculators are not permitted.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will we do any sample questions before we begin CAT4? 	<p>Yes. On the day students will be given clear instructions by the test administrator. Everyone will be given an opportunity to complete several sample questions (similar to those provided) before they begin each CAT4 test.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who do I contact if I have any further questions about CAT4? 	<p>Students and parents/guardians can contact Ms McDonald at the school on 053-9234245 with any further queries.</p>



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Sample CAT4 Questions & Solutions

SAMPLE 1) VERBAL REASONING BATTERY – thinking with words

(a) Verbal Classification

Instructions: Three words are presented which are similar in some way or ways. From a selection of five possible answers, you must identify a fourth word with similar properties.

rain

fog

sunshine

winter	snow	weather	dark	night
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Solution: The answer is **snow** because rain, fog and sunshine are all types of weather and snow is also a type of weather.

(b) Verbal Analogies

Instructions: A pair of connected words is presented alongside a single word. From a selection of five possible answers, you must select a word to complete the second pair in the same way.

window	shade	hang	drapes	cloth
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Solution: The answer is **window**, because a carpet goes on a floor and a curtain hangs at a window.

SAMPLE 2) QUANTITATIVE (OR NUMERICAL) REASONING BATTERY – thinking with numbers

(a) Number Analogies

Two pairs of related numbers are presented. From a selection of five possible answers, you must select a number to complete a third pair.

$$[1 \longrightarrow 2] \qquad [5 \longrightarrow 10] \qquad [4 \longrightarrow ?]$$

The answer is **8**. Here 1 add 1 makes 2, but that doesn't work for the second pair because 5 add 1 is 6, not 10. Instead, you have to multiply by 2 to get the second part of each pair, so 4 times 2 is 8.

(b) Number Series

A sequence of numbers created by a transformation rule is presented. From a selection of five possible answers, you must identify the rule and continue the sequence.

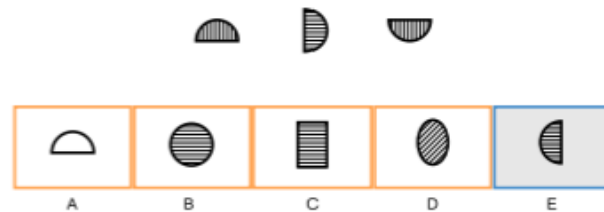
$$18 \quad 5 \quad 17 \quad 7 \quad 16 \quad 9 \quad \longrightarrow$$

The answer is **15**. There are two number patterns in this series. The first, third and fifth numbers go down by 1 at a time - 18, 17 then 16. The numbers in between them go up by two at a time - 5, 7 then 9. This means the next number must be 16 minus 1, giving 15.

SAMPLE 3) NON-VERBAL REASONING BATTERY – thinking with shapes

(a) Figure Classification

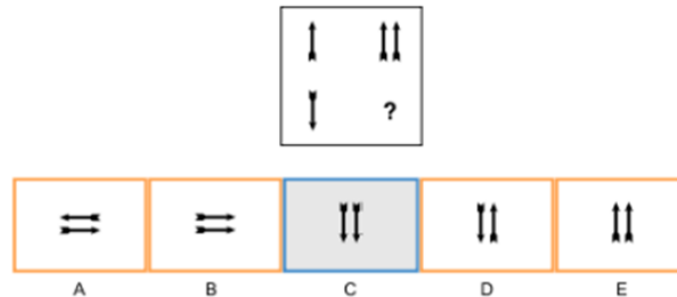
Three designs are presented which are similar in some way or ways. From a selection of five possible answers, you must identify a fourth design with similar properties.



The answer is **E** because it is the only answer choice that is a striped semi-circle, like the first three figures.

(b) Figure Matrices

Designs are presented in a grid with one empty square and, from a selection of five possible answers, you must identify the missing design.

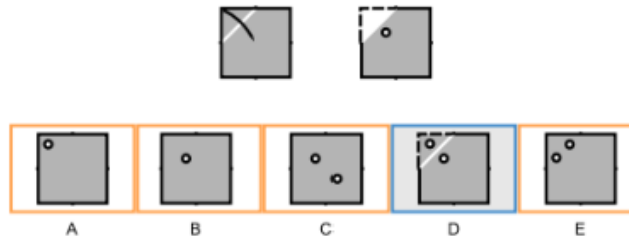


The answer is **C** because in the top pair 'one arrow up' goes to 'two arrows up', so in the second pair 'one arrow down' must go to 'two arrows down'.

SAMPLE 4) SPATIAL ABILITY BATTERY - thinking with shape and space

(a) Figure Analysis

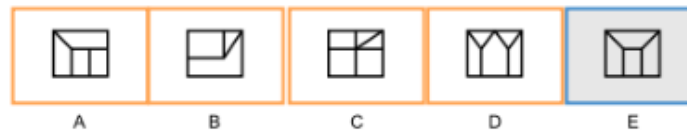
A series of diagrams shows a square being folded repeatedly, and the then punched through with holes. From a selection of five possible answers, you must identify how the paper will appear when unfolded.



The answer is **D**. The hole is punched through both layers of paper, so as it is unfolded the holes will be a mirror image of each other, with the crease being the mirror line.

(b) Figure Recognition

Several complex designs are presented along with a single target shape. From a selection of five possible answers, you must identify the target shape within one of the complex designs.



The answer is **E**. It isn't A because that shows the target flipped over. It isn't B or C because that have shapes that are the wrong size.