



What is a cognitive assessment?

Information for children and young people

A cognitive assessment is a test which looks at your thinking skills, everyday living skills, behaviour and emotional wellbeing. This helps us to understand certain problems you may have. For example, you may be finding it difficult to:

- Remember things
- Concentrate or pay attention
- Carry out certain activities on your own.

We want to find out your strengths and difficulties. We also want to give you some useful tips that could help. The assessment only involves pen and paper tasks.

What will appointments/the assessment involve?

Usually, a cognitive assessment takes place over 2-3 appointments. Each appointment can last between 1-2 hours.

The first appointment is an interview. We will ask you and your family some questions and we will check that you want the assessment to go ahead.

At your second appointment you will be asked to complete different tasks, puzzles and questions. This helps us to find out about how your brain works.



We find out about your brain's **'verbal abilities'**. Verbal abilities are your brain's understanding of words or language



We learn about your brain's **'visual abilities'**. This is how you understand pictures, patterns or solve problems that do not use words



We look at an area called **'working memory'**. This is how well your brain uses information that you have to remember – like doing sums



We also look at an area called **'fluid reasoning'**. This is how well your brain can understand similarities between patterns and objects to make rules about them



The last area we look at is **'processing speed'**. This is how fast your brain can think. It is the time it takes for you to learn new skills.

It will not be possible to let you know how you got on with the assessment on the same day. Once we have looked at the assessment, we like to meet with you again to talk through the results.

You will get a copy of our report. We also talk through strategies that you could put in place to help with your difficulties.

Sometimes it is useful for us to share this information with your school or college so they can also offer support that better suits your needs. Your consultant and other relevant professionals (e.g. your GP, School), will also get a copy of the report.

Sometimes it might be helpful for the psychologist to join a school meeting or refer you onto another team which can support you.

Further testing, such as questionnaires or other tasks, may also be required.

Things to remember for your appointments:



If you use glasses or a hearing aid, bring these with you to the appointment



You might find some things easy and some things tricky, this is normal



You are very welcome to ask questions, ask for a break or have a snack.