



Scoil Dara Academic Tracking

As part of our strategic plan Scoil Dara is developing a comprehensive academic tracking model. This student focused programme aims to record and review, the academic progress and attainment levels of students, at specific and determined points along their learning journey. Information and data gained through this lens will facilitate a better and shared understanding of academic strengths, effective learning habits, areas for additional application and/or support. One of the central aims is to ensure each student is on the best learning path for their learning strengths and styles, their needs and situation.

The tracking of student progress and attainment began when our current 2nd year cohort joined the Scoil Dara community. All students availed of the CAT4 (Cognitive Abilities Test) ahead of commencing their formal secondary school education. This broad based and informative model assesses a student's reasoning (thinking abilities) in key areas that support educational development and academic attainment by identifying likely academic potential, learning strengths, and learning preferences. It measures the four principal areas of reasoning – verbal, non-verbal, quantitative, and spatial. The CAT4 assessments provide valuable information for teachers to indicate the academic potential of a child and how best to deliver inclusive learning opportunities - education catering for each child or group of students.

Academic tracking promotes individual and shared reflection and offers the impetus to change a grade, attitude, approach or indeed the experience of being assessed. In addition, academic tracking is a successful intervention programme that supports student self-review: reviewing their own work, tracking their own progress and working to set their own short-term targets and longer-term goals in order to realise their potential and progress toward their ambition.

The CAT4 assessments represent a valuable snapshot in time, generating a clear indication of the academic and learning capacities of a student while also addressing aspects of the young person's hidden potential by assessing the a broad range of reasoning abilities. CAT4 provides a rounded profile of the whole young person as learner. Following from and building upon these CAT4s, we hope to work with a small group of second year students, targeting specific learning strategies, reviewing learning progress, reflecting on learning outlooks and attitudes to learning, among a range of other measures. In tracking attainment at key points along their learning journey we hope to affect and improve outcomes, supporting strategic target planning and goal setting and applying effective and best-fit learning practices in place to achieve those targets and goals.

If you require further information, contact ciancarty@scoildara.ie.