

What is a cognitive assessment?

The purpose of a cognitive assessment is to provide information about a child's level of functioning both within and outside of school. It will involve a comprehensive assessment of several cognitive domains which involve different areas of the brain:



- Verbal Intelligence (language comprehension and verbal reasoning)
- Performance Intelligence (non-verbal reasoning)
- Motor function
- Visual-spatial function
- Attention and Executive function (processing speed, sequencing)
- Memory and Learning (short-term memory and mental arithmetic)
- Language (verbal comprehension and receptive vocabulary)

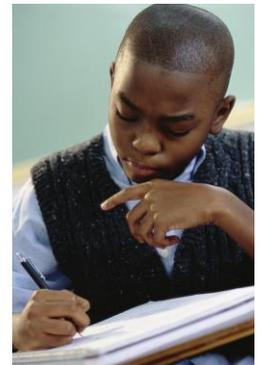
Why has my child been offered a cognitive assessment?

A cognitive assessment is very important in addition to scans of the blood vessels in your child's brain (Transcranial Doppler or TCD scans). TCD scans and cognitive assessments are routinely offered to young people who might be at higher risk of having a stroke.

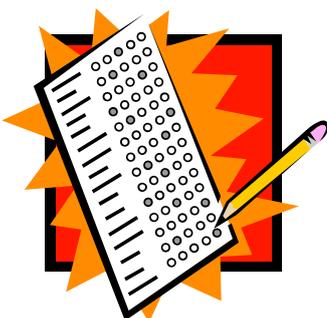
The purpose of the cognitive assessment is to get an initial picture about your child's skills and abilities; this is sometimes known as a "baseline" measure. This baseline can be useful for a number of reasons. For example, it can help to monitor your child's skills and abilities over time and helps us to make sure that your child is achieving in line with their capabilities.

A cognitive assessment can also help to identify particular areas of strength or weakness, so that parents, teachers and the young person themselves are able to understand their own capabilities and devise the appropriate strategies to maximise learning and development as early as possible.

With a better understanding of how a child thinks, recommendations can be made for bolstering weak skills and enhancing areas of strength. Often children can use their strengths to help compensate for their areas of weakness. An assessment can also sometimes help to explain certain behaviours that a child might exhibit, and can assist with improvement in understanding such behaviour and how it can be managed.



How can I explain what a cognitive assessment is to my child?



It is sometimes helpful to explain the cognitive assessment to children as an appointment or series of appointments where they will get to do puzzles with a clinician. They will learn what they are better at and what they might need help with – everyone who does the puzzles will notice something they need help with and what they are good at. They will also be able to win stickers and prizes on the day of their cognitive assessment.

How will the results of the assessment be used?

Results from cognitive assessments can be used in the following ways:

- To give the haematology team at the hospital an idea about your child's current skills and abilities and compare this with later assessments or physical investigations.
- To allow us to keep track of your child's skills and abilities over time and ensure they are achieving their full potential in different areas of attainment.
- To identify any areas that might need further investigation.
- Results can be shared with your child's school to help the school think about how your child learns best and work best with any areas of particular strength or weakness.

As described above, the results of the assessment help to explain how a child thinks and what his/her cognitive strengths and weaknesses are, also how they relate to his/her functioning in school and other applied settings (e.g. making friends, listening to instructions, following through on household tasks).

This information is outlined in a report which is often provided along with oral feedback in a post-assessment appointment. Information contained within the report is confidential and will not be shared with any other organisation (e.g. school) unless consent to do so is given by parents and / or the young person.

Have more questions about this assessment?

If you have further questions about the cognitive assessment or the process then feel free to ask your specialist nurse or contact the haematology psychology department via phone or email using the following contact details, please leave your contact details and make it clear that you have a query about a haematology cognitive assessment:

Email: cim-tr.WhittingtonCHP@nhs.net

Tel: 0203 316 8859 (Tue/Thu) or 020 7527 1538 (Mon)

Mobile: 07557 459 640 (all other times)