

# What is a ‘Cognitive Assessment’?

## So, what actually is a ‘cognitive assessment’?

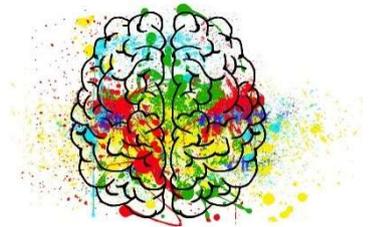
A cognitive assessment is an assessment that involves trying to gain an understanding of the thinking and reasoning skills of children. A cognitive assessment is especially important at trying to establish brain-behaviour relationships. It is NOT about trying to work out the IQ (Intelligence Quotient) of your child.

## Why has my child be referred for a cognitive assessment?

Your child will have been referred for this type of assessment because there have been concerns from other professionals about your child’s learning and behaviour. Your child may have a medical condition that affects their ability to learn and understand, and a cognitive assessment can help to identify those areas that are affected and those that are not. Sometimes a person is referred for an assessment and then retested a year or more later to see whether there has been any change in their abilities. A person that performs a cognitive assessment is a Psychologist or Clinical Psychologist who has received training in this area or who has gained experience in this area over time.

## What is involved in a cognitive assessment?

These assessments can take a lot of time to complete. The assessment usually begins with an interview with the parents/caregivers to gain an understanding of the areas of difficulty for the child both at home and at school and anywhere else that is important for the family. The clinician will also be spending some time observing your child throughout the assessment and may want to observe your child at school and talk to their teacher. In some instances it is also helpful to observe your child at home. This is so they can get a good overall picture of how your child is getting along. Finally the clinician will put together a report and will arrange to feedback to the family the results of the assessment. This report will contain recommendations and strategies to help your child if needed. The clinician can also feed back the results of the assessment to your child’s school, if you agree.



## What do I need to do?

Please try your best to ensure your child has eaten well that day, and slept well the night prior where possible, as hungry tired brains do not work as well! Please bring along a drink bottle and a snack for your child. You may also wish to bring along something for yourself to read or do while your child is completing their tasks. During testing it may be tempting to help your child when they are finding a task difficult, they may even ask you to do it for them. The aim of testing is to see what your child is able to do independently, so we ask that you just briefly encourage them without leading them towards an answer. If there is anything that you do not wish to discuss in front of your child please let us know prior to your initial appointment. You can leave a message for the clinician involved to call you back and discuss it over the phone, or a parent only session can be arranged.

Please feel free to ask your clinician more questions if you have them.  
We look forward to seeing you.

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