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St Joseph's RC Primary School, Gabalfa celebrates NACE Challenge Award second accreditation

The **National Association for Able Children in Education (NACE)** has named **St Joseph's RC Primary School** the 26th school in Wales, 163rd overall, to be accredited for the second time with the **NACE Challenge Award**. The award is given in recognition of school-wide commitment to high-quality provision for more able and talented learners, within the context of challenge for all.

NACE CEO Rob Lightfoot said: *“St Joseph's Primary School has worked hard to attain reaccreditation through the NACE Challenge Award. It has displayed a continued commitment to develop an environment in which all learners are challenged and supported to be the best they can be.”*

The award is based on the NACE Challenge Framework, which sets out criteria for high-quality provision for more able and talented learners within a wider ethos of challenge for all. The framework is available as part of the NACE Challenge Development Programme – a suite of resources developed by NACE to help schools evaluate and improve their provision for more able learners.

NACE's assessor reported: *“Pupils show care and respect to visitors and everyone around the school ... with excellent engagement and enthusiasm for learning in every lesson observed. The staff ... use direct modelling to promote extended wellbeing language which encourages an atmosphere of ... positive behaviour as well as bilingual skills. Pupils demonstrated insightful knowledge and understanding when discussing complex topics.*

There are regular ‘catch-up’ meetings to ensure staff have a knowledge and understanding of the 6 areas noted in the Curriculum for Wales.

The school is fully involved in more able and challenge provision. Senior leaders stress the importance of impressing on pupils they can achieve anything they set their minds to, and the abilities of the pupils interviewed were impressive.

Pupils stated there was a special bond between them and staff ... Adjectives such as loving, valued, friendly, welcoming and caring were used to describe their time at the school and their appreciation of being cared for and listened to.”

Improving provision for the more able remains a priority for many schools and has been highlighted by Estyn as a key focus. The experience and evidence gathered by Challenge Award-accredited schools also shows that effective strategies to

improve provision for the more able are likely to have a positive impact on the achievement of a much wider group of learners.

To attain the Challenge Award, schools must complete a detailed self-evaluation using the NACE Challenge Framework, submit a portfolio of supporting evidence, and undertake assessment by a NACE associate. The assessment process includes examination of school data and key documents; lesson observations; and interviews with school leaders, learners, parents and governors.

CEO Rob Lightfoot said, *“The Challenge Award is presented in recognition of whole-school commitment to and achievement in providing effective challenge and support for all – spanning school leadership, curriculum, teaching and learning, processes for identification and tracking, extracurricular opportunities, strong communication and partnerships, and ongoing evaluation.”*

St Joseph's RC Primary School will now remain part of the international community of Challenge Award-accredited schools which have demonstrated a sustained and effective commitment to meeting the needs of more able and talented learners, and an interest in sharing expertise for the wider benefit of the education community.

Find out more: www.nace.co.uk/challenge

Notes for editors

The National Association for Able Children in Education (NACE) is the UK's leading charity dedicated to supporting schools and teachers across every aspect of provision for more able learners, in the context of challenge for all. Drawing on 40 years' experience in the field, NACE is at the forefront of thought leadership and evidence-based policy for the more able, with NACE member schools leading the way in implementing best practice.

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