

Chelmsford County High School for Girls celebrates NACE Challenge Award accreditation

The **National Association for Able Children in Education (NACE)** has named **Chelmsford County High School for Girls** the 492nd school to be accredited with the **NACE Challenge Award**. The award is given in recognition of school-wide commitment to high-quality provision for more able learners, within the context of challenge for all.

NACE CEO Rob Lightfoot said:

"Chelmsford County High School for Girls has worked successfully to attain the NACE Challenge Award. It has shown itself to be committed to developing an environment in which all learners are both 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 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: *"This is a school in which students can safely make new discoveries, accept challenges and take risks. Learning is a joyful experience, shared equally by teachers and students. One student said, 'our teachers trust us to come up with intellectual arguments, and our knowledge is respected and seen as equal with the teachers'."*

"Habitual challenge is central to teaching and learning. All teachers are committed to providing a cognitively challenging experience both within and beyond lessons. Middle leaders are empowered to implement subject specific frameworks to support adaptive teaching, based on the whole school model. This provides each subject with a unique identity, allowing students to flourish through a wide range of challenges. The school has a shared language and understanding of all that curriculum embodies. In the broadest sense learners are expected to become: articulate; creative; enquiring; knowledgeable; principled; reflective and resilient. The joy of learning, which exists in the school, can be partly attributed to the strong interpersonal relationships which exist in the classrooms. Students are intellectual but humble learners. Their teachers are highly skilled, respectful and sensitive to the needs of those in the classroom."

Improving provision for the more able remains a priority for many schools. 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."*

Chelmsford County High School for Girls will now be 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 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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