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Walton Priory Middle School celebrates NACE Challenge Award accreditation

The **National Association for Able Children in Education (NACE)** has named **Walton Priory Middle School** the 463rd 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: *“Walton Priory Middle School 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: *“School leaders, including governance, are outward looking and reflective. Together they have created an ethos of high expectations and seek out and celebrate all children’s achievements and strengths including those of the more able, preparing them for the future in an ever-changing world.*

The school provides rich opportunities for learners to develop aspirations, knowledge, and skills from entry to Year 8 through, in particular, a strong focus on STEAM subjects... The curriculum deliberately breaks down stereotypes through the range of learning opportunities provided to all pupils.

More able learners feel supported and are proud of their abilities and achievements... They demonstrate confidence and humility in equal measure.”

Improving provision for the more able remains a priority for many schools and has been highlighted by Ofsted and the DfE 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.”*

Walton Priory Middle School 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 almost 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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