



Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School and Nursery, Southend, is the first Catholic school in Essex to achieve the prestigious NACE Challenge Award for excellence in provision for able, gifted and talented pupils.

‘Pupils at Sacred Heart Catholic School and Nursery exemplify the ethos of the school through their caring attitudes, exemplary behaviour and love of learning. They say that Sacred Heart School is special because, “Everyone gets on really well, teachers teach you at your level and people help you if you’re stuck.”

The whole school staff are committed to ensuring a high level of challenge in all lessons. Pupils of all ages and abilities are taught how to take responsibility for their own learning; to work well independently and collaboratively.

The school also makes effective use of outside providers to enhance opportunities for gifts and talents to be discovered and developed. An extremely wide range of achievements, effort and enterprise are acknowledged and commemorated.

Parents appreciate the school ethos where everyone counts and say that their children feel proud and motivated.’ Extract from Challenge Award Assessment Report Oct 2007

Sacred Heart Primary School and Nursery is the first Catholic school in Essex and the forty-ninth primary school in the UK to achieve the prestigious Challenge Award for Able, Gifted and Talented Pupils. This Award is given for high quality work by the whole school, teachers and governors, in challenging all pupils, including those with high abilities, to achieve their best.

The Award is given by NACE: the National Association for Able Children in Education, a leading national education organisation and registered charity established for 24 years. The Association exists to help the daily work of teachers providing for pupils with high abilities whilst enabling all pupils to flourish. It provides advice, training and resources for teachers, including The Challenge Award Self-Evaluation Framework which Sacred Heart Catholic School has used to audit and plan what it provides for able, gifted and talented pupils. Many thousands of primary and secondary schools are using The Challenge Award Framework to develop their work.

Assessors, who spent a day in the school, were impressed by the meaningful and thorough monitoring and auditing procedures and the high focus on improving the quality of teaching and learning plus the effective work of teaching assistants, well-versed governors and the well-qualified coordinator.

Assessors judged the quality of the school’s work by observing lessons, interviewing the pupils, teachers, parents and governors and by looking at the pupils’ work. The Award is given when schools demonstrate that they meet the criteria of the Award and are committed to continuing high-quality provision for able, gifted and talented pupils.

Oct 2007 Julie Fitzpatrick, Chief Executive

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