



Rushcombe First School, Corfe Mullen, Wimborne, is the first School in Dorset to achieve the prestigious NACE Challenge Award for excellence in provision for able, gifted and talented pupils.

‘At Rushcombe there is very effective co-ordination of provision for able, gifted and talented pupils, strongly supported by the headteacher and a very committed staff team. The Rushcombe vision to create an inclusive community where all learners are successful and independent is embodied in the work of the school. There is a shared commitment from staff, parents and pupils in creating a community of learning and enquiry. Pupils view themselves as equal partners, speaking confidently and with great understanding about their aspirations to become very effective learners. Pupils explained,

“ We all have targets for the 5Rs which means being responsible, reciprocal, resilient, resourceful and reflective. We learn from these and use the strategies again.”

Governors provide very good active support and parents spoke highly of the inclusive and supportive approach of the school.’

Extract from Challenge Award Assessment Report Dec 2006

Rushcombe First School is the first school in the South West Region and the nineteenth 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 Pupils, a leading national education organisation and registered charity established for 23 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 Rushcombe First School has used to audit and plan what it provides for able, gifted and talented pupils. Many 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 wide-ranging curriculum, with its emphasis on developing pupils’ abilities to think critically and reflectively using the 5Rs and through lessons on philosophy. The very good use of teachers’ questioning encouraged pupils to analyse, reason and provide complex answers.

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.