**Able Underachievers**

Some able pupils may underachieve deliberately for a variety of reasons. Some may exhibit disruptive behaviour. Others may lack confidence socially, emotionally or in their own ability. Some possible indicators of underachievement:

* day dreaming;
* boredom and restlessness, but flashes of brilliance when interested;
* high quality oral work but poor quality written work;
* poor performance in tests;
* deterioration in standard of work over time;
* dislike of routine work/unfinished routine work;
* deliberate underachievement;
* aspirations low compared to ability;
* disruptive behaviour;
* hostility;
* preferring to mix with older pupils or adults;
* low self-esteem;
* overly self-critical;
* critical of others; and
* uncooperative in group work.

**What can schools do to help reduce underachievement?**

* Recognise that pupils have different learning styles and ensure that planning allows for this.
* Increase challenge in work.
* Give more opportunities for pupils to demonstrate their learning.
* Encourage, and talk to, parents who may not understand/support their able child at home.
* Encourage a positive culture of achievement among pupils/teachers within school.
* Recognise that for some able pupils peer pressure, fear of teasing or bullying as well as self-consciousness about their ability, may affect their performance and they will require a sensitive but positive approach.
* Use a range of identification strategies within school.
* Be open to recognise unusual abilities.
* Recognise that non-conformity may not necessarily be equated with disruptive behaviour. In some instances it may indicate a divergent or creative thinker.