

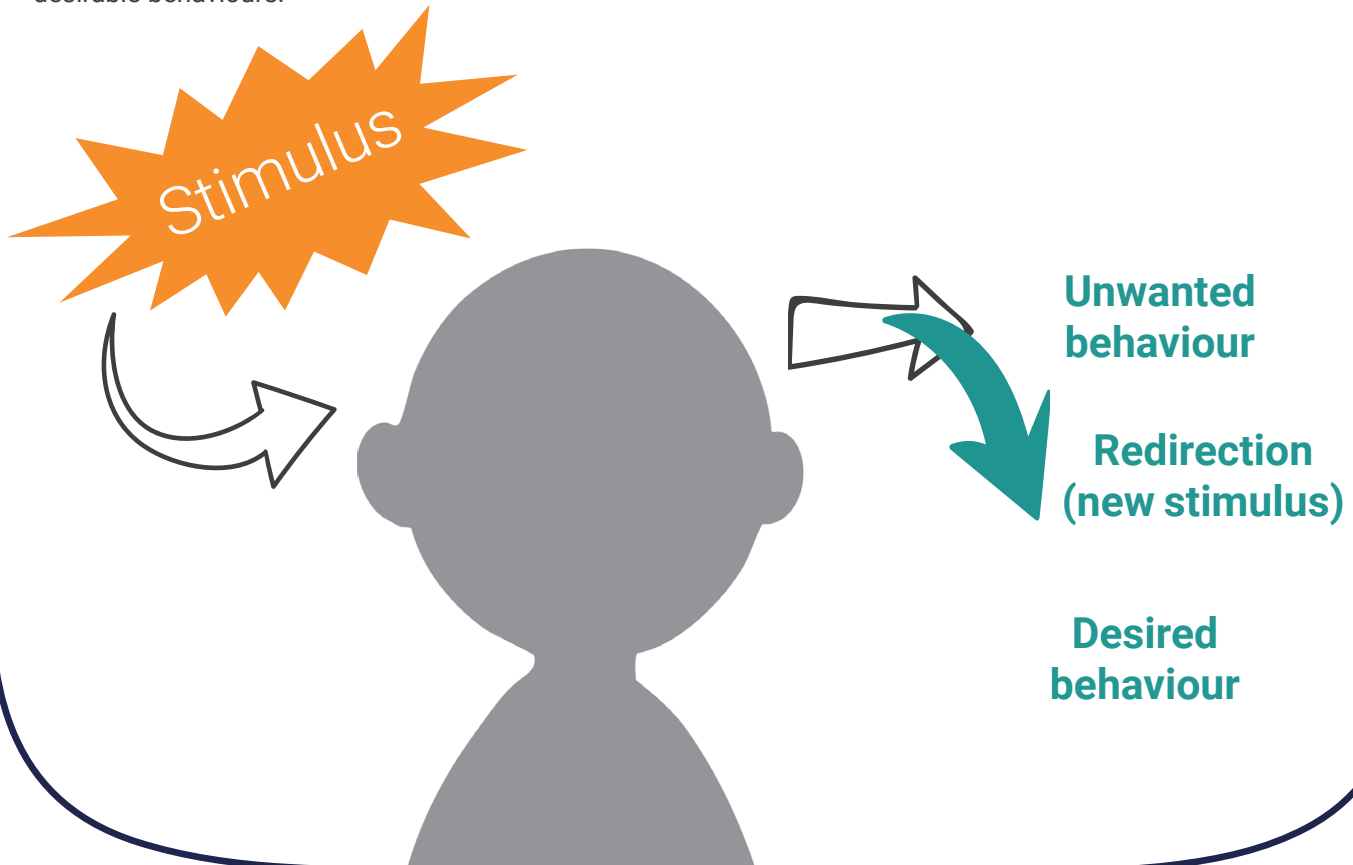
# The Idea:

## Using Redirection in Behaviour Management

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### What is redirection?

Redirection is a positive behaviour management strategy that works by shifting a pupil's attention from one thing to another. It can be a helpful tool to refocus a pupil away from a situation that evokes negative feelings, such as anxiety, fear or anger. It can also facilitate a shift from engaging in disruptive or unsafe behaviour towards more desirable behaviours.



### Why use redirection?

Redirection is a positive behaviour management technique. It can be used to:

- promote desired behaviours;
- minimise unwanted behaviours;
- prevent harm or injury;
- reduce the need for punishment/sanctions;
- reduce the likelihood of argumentative behaviour and non-compliance.

Paris et al. (2021) suggest that redirection:

- allows staff to engage pupils in alternative behaviours that are more acceptable;
- consists of instruction and simple cues staff can embed into teachable moments throughout the school day;
- is a proactive teaching strategy that teachers can use in combination with other positive behaviour management techniques;
- can be used to prevent a pupil from engaging in a challenging behaviour before it escalates;
- can be used to re-engage a pupil with appropriate activities and therefore maximise their learning time;
- maximises learning for all children in the classroom as they will not be distracted by the challenging behaviour.

## What are the basic principles of redirection?

### Be positive

Maintain a positive attitude when redirecting behaviour and view it as a part of your teaching, rather than a distraction. This will help to maintain a positive learning environment.

Try to be confident in your delivery, whichever strategy you opt for. If you believe that the pupils will react in the way that you want them to, you are more likely to convey that confidence to the pupils who, in turn, are more likely to respond in the way you intend.

### Keep it as low-key as possible

Use the minimal intervention required to achieve the desired outcome. As soon as the pupil starts to re-engage, move back to teaching the intended input. By monitoring class engagement, you can intervene at the earliest possible opportunity and avoid the situation escalating.

### Minimise discussion

By minimising discussion, staff can reduce the likelihood of argumentative responses. Redirection can be successfully achieved by non-verbal gestures, a quick instruction or a brief, closed question. The key is to minimise words and emotion where possible.

### Distract from the negative and focus on the positive

Ensure that you are not directing the attention of the class towards unwanted behaviour. If you do have to talk about behaviour directly, describe the behaviour that you want rather than the behaviour you want to stop.

## How do you use redirection?

There are a number of different redirection strategies that you can use. Staff should use their professional judgement and their knowledge of the situation, class and individuals concerned to select which strategy is the most likely to be effective.

Below are some examples of redirection strategies:

### Praise pupils who are on task

By praising those who are doing what you wish them to, the focus remains on desired behaviours rather than allowing undesired behaviour to become a distraction.

### Boost their interest

Boost the pupils' interest levels by asking an engaging problem or telling a story related to the activity. Sometimes, negative behaviours can creep in when pupils get bored so ensure that you keep the lesson going at a suitable pace to keep them interested.

### Create redirection routines

When you need to redirect the entire class, you can introduce a familiar routine which can bring everyone's attention back to you. You will need to train the pupils to know what to do but this can be a really effective way of getting their focus back on you quickly. Here are some examples:

- Raise your hand in the air and expect pupils to copy you, go silent and look at you.
- Clap a rhythm, expect the pupils to repeat the rhythm back to you and redirect their focus onto you.

### Use non-verbal cues

Use non-verbal cues to show a pupil that you have noted their off-task behaviour. Examples include: folding your arms and looking at the pupil; giving a small head nod towards their work or holding their chair for them to sit down when they have left their seat.

## Offer support

When a pupil is off task, simply offer them support to continue with their work.

Example:

"Are you okay [name student]? Shall we look at that together?"

## Reposition yourself

Sometimes, all it takes to get a pupil back on task is to make them aware that you have noticed their off-task behaviour. When you spot pupils who are not engaging fully, walk up to them and stand nearer to them. Often, they will notice your presence and refocus on their work.

## Use silence

If pupils are not listening to a verbal teaching input, you can stop suddenly and wait until everyone's attention is back on you. This reinforces an expectation that pupils will listen, without you having to say anything negative or single any pupil out.

## Ask a question

When you feel that a pupil is not concentrating fully, ask them a simple question related to the lesson. Try to keep this as a question that they are likely to be able to answer to avoid humiliating them as this could cause a negative response. As soon as their attention is back on their work, encourage them to carry on.

Example:

"Could you read the question at the top of page 5 out loud please [name pupil]? I think we could discuss that one as a class."

(The pupil reads out the question and there is a quick class discussion.)

"Thanks for that [name pupil]. Please could you write the answer down in your book now?"

## Provide a deadline

Set a verbal deadline so that pupils know that you are going to expect them to have finished the task by a certain time. This can be a whole-class deadline or directed at a specific individual or group.

Examples:

"You have five more minutes to complete the task that you are on, everyone." (class)

"I'm going to come over to your table in two minutes to see what question you are on." (group)

"Are you okay with finishing that in three minutes [name pupil]? I'll be over there next to see if you need any help." (individual)

## Break, then support

Ask an off-task pupil to do something which offers a small break from the task and then support them to get back to work immediately afterwards. This means you can intervene without causing them embarrassment or drawing attention to their off-task behaviour.

Example:

Ask a pupil to hand some work books out and then, as they return to their seat, support them to find where they were in their written work.

## This Will Help If...

- you want to develop positive behaviour management in your classroom
- you want to minimise argumentative behaviour and non-compliance

## Start Your Research Here

[This blog post](#) explains how to use respectful redirection.

Twinkl has created [this resource](#) to help you to do a behaviour audit in your own classrooms.

A more general overview about behaviour management in schools can be found in [this document](#) from the Department of Education and [this guidance report](#) from the Education Endowment Foundation.

## Action Points

### Pick a strategy

Choose one of the redirection strategies to focus on. Use it with a variety of pupils in different contexts and record the outcome.

**Do different redirection strategies work best in different situations?**

### Ask someone to observe

It can be helpful to ask someone to observe which redirection strategies you use and when you use them. It is likely that you have often used redirection techniques without even realising. It can be helpful to get an outside perspective on how effectively you manage different situations and feedback can offer interesting insights into how you could refine your practice further.

**Who could provide you with insightful, constructive feedback?**

### Do a case study

Choose one pupil who struggles to maintain appropriate behaviour and try out a few redirection strategies over the space of a few days. Evaluate whether there is an overall change to their behaviour and consider how they respond to certain interventions.

**Which strategies work best for this pupil? Why might this be?**

### Notice when situations escalate

From time to time, situations will arise in which pupils become argumentative or their behaviour has escalated to such a point that redirection will not work. When this happens, spend a few moments reflecting on what you could have done differently to redirect their behaviour before it reached this point.

**When a situation escalates, what are the options to help a pupil get back on track?**

## Source Material

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