

Zones of Regulation

We recently introduced The Zones of Regulation to the children through our PSHE teaching.

What are the zones of regulation?

Zones of Regulation is an approach used to support the development of self-regulation in children. All the different ways children feel and the states of alertness they experience are categorized into four coloured zones. Children who are well regulated are able to be in the appropriate zone at the appropriate time.

Blue	Green	Yellow	Red
			
Low	Happy	Wobbly	Angry
Running Slow	Good to Go	Caution	STOP
unhappy tired withdrawn tearful	positive proud calm focused	excited nervous frustrated annoyed	mad furious yelling aggressive

Teaching the zones gives children a shared language to talk about their emotions by associating them with highly visual coloured zones. The approach is based on research and is highly respected as a systematic, cognitive behavioural technique leading children to greater independent regulation. It helps to teach children to identify their feelings, their levels of alertness, to understand how their behaviour influences those around them and gives them the tools they can use to manage their feelings.

How do the Zones of Regulation help children?

- It provides a vocabulary to talk about emotions
- It helps children recognise their own emotions
- It helps children to detect the emotions of others
- It helps them recognise what might trigger certain emotions
- It helps them see how others may interpret their behaviour
- Gives them tools for problem solving

Why are we introducing this?

- It gives the children and adults the right words – a common language – to talk about emotions in a way that is non-judgemental
- It is simple for everyone to understand
- It teaches healthy coping and self-regulation strategies

A person who can self – regulate is able to:

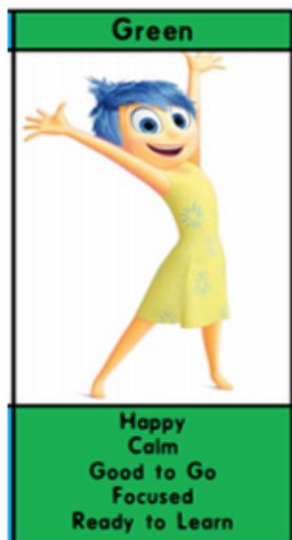
- Remain calm in a stressful situation
- Cheer themselves up after a disappointment
- Know when they are experiencing an emotional overload and adjust.

The Zones



Blue

This is where we are at a low state of alertness. Our brain and body is moving slowly and sluggishly. We may be feeling tired, sad, bored or unwell.



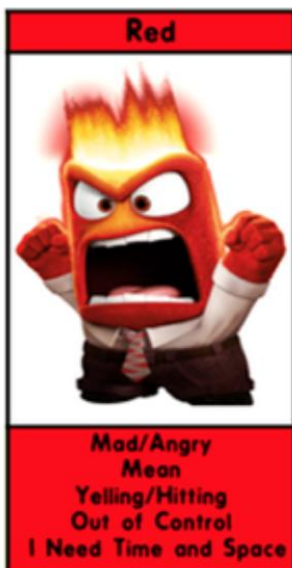
Green

We are in control of our emotions in this zone. We are in a regulated state of alertness. We may be feeling calm, happy and ready to learn.



Yellow

This is the zone where we experience more intense emotions but we are still able to maintain a level of control. We are in a heightened state of alertness but we do still have some control. We may be feeling worried, frustrated, anxious, excited, scared or overwhelmed.



Red

We are struggling to control our emotions in this zone. We may be feeling angry, wild, out of control or terrified. We may be hitting out or becoming physical with others.

Important things to remember:

- There is no 'bad' zone.
- Everyone experiences all of the zones at different times and different circumstances.
- We can't change the way children feel but we can help them manage their feelings/states and behaviours and validate their feelings, 'I can see you are angry and I understand, but it is not okay to ...'
- You can be in more than one zone at a time
- If a child is confident using words to describe their emotions, they might not always need to relate this to a zone. However, making links to the zones will help them choose the right strategy to manage their feelings.

- If a child is in the **red** zone, you must limit the verbal – this is not a teachable moment! Instead, discuss the use of tools when the child is calm and well-regulated and plan for if/when it happens again.

Children have been taught the coloured zones and have discussed strategies to help regulate their emotions. Some useful strategies include:

Blue zone

This is where we need to help our bodies wake up, feel better and regain focus. What can I do if I am in the **blue zone**?

<https://youtu.be/nqHPJ6X71wY>

Green zone

This is where we are feeling calm, focussed, happy and ready to learn. We are well regulated and proactive. What can I do if I am in the **green zone**?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B1TsPft9Hj4>

Yellow zone

This is where our feelings are heightened but we are still in some control. We need help to calm ourselves. What can I do if I am in the **yellow zone**?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ILADcIZ52HI>

Red zone

This is where we are feeling completely overwhelmed. We need help to stay safe and calm down. What can I do if I am in the **red zone**?

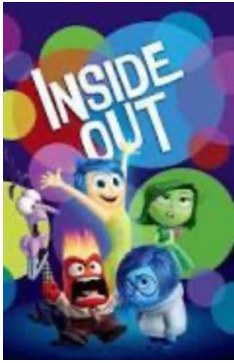
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xpJ6gGwZEFY>

Sensory breaks

Some sensory strategies include:

- Squeezing playdough or scrunching up paper into a ball
- Use of a fidget toy
- Blowing bubbles
- Listening to calming music
- Using of a trampoline
- Rolling on an exercise ball
- Drawing
- Reading
- Counting
- Deep breathing

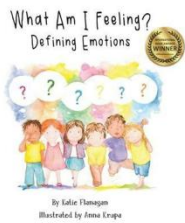
If you are interested in exploring this further, there is a list of links you may be interested in:



This is a great clip to introduce feelings with your child. The clip is from the Disney film 'Inside Out' which is centred around a child's emotions.

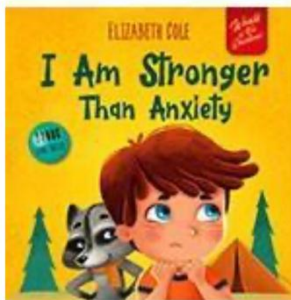
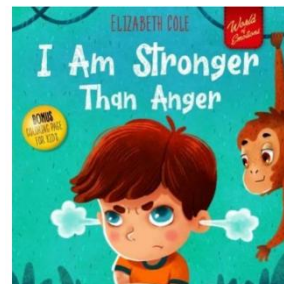
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1S0RKRRyqhQ>

The Way I Feel is a lovely way of introducing feelings to younger children



Another good book to explore feelings with younger children

This book explores anger and give strategies on how to manage it.



This book explores anxiety and gives useful strategies on how to manage it