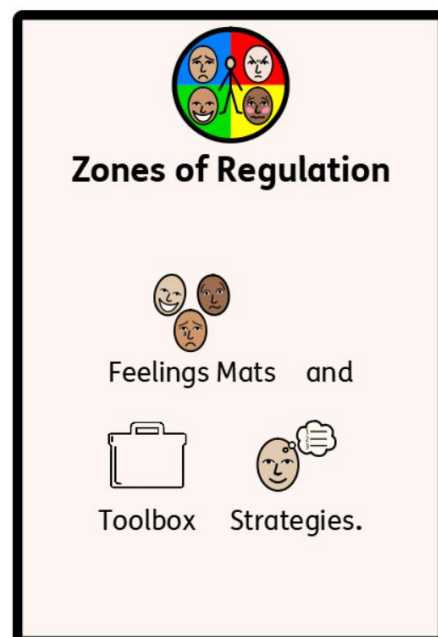


Zones of Regulation

A Guide for Parents and Carers.



The Zones of Regulation

The Zones of Regulation is an internationally renowned intervention which helps to teach children how to understand, recognise and manage emotions. This is known as 'self-regulation'.

"We all encounter trying circumstances that test our limits from time to time. If we are able to recognize when we are becoming less regulated, we are able to do something about it to manage our feelings and get ourselves to a healthy place. This is the goal of the zones of regulation."

- Leah Kuypers, creator of the Zones of Regulation

Self-regulation is the ability to understand and manage your behaviour and your reactions to feelings and things happening around you. It includes being able to:

- regulate reactions to strong emotions like frustration, excitement, anger and embarrassment
- calm down after something exciting or upsetting
- focus on a task
- refocus attention on a new task
- control impulses
- behave in ways that help you get along with other people.



Self-regulation helps a child to:

- learn at school because self-regulation gives the child the ability to sit and listen in the classroom.
- behave in socially acceptable ways because self-regulation gives the child the ability to control impulses.
- make friends because self-regulation gives the child the ability to take turns in games and conversation, share toys, and express emotions in appropriate ways.
- become more independent because self-regulation gives the child the ability to make appropriate decisions about behaviour and learn how to behave in new situations with less guidance from adults.

At Wath Central, we live and breathe our school aim of valuing *'every child for who they are and prepare them for everything they could be.'* Therefore, we want to teach all of our children good coping and regulation strategies which they will be able to use both during primary school and throughout the rest of their lives.

Zones of Regulation supports children in:

- Recognising when they are in the different zones and learn how to change or stay in the Zone they are in.
- Increasing their emotional vocabulary so they can explain how they are feeling.
- Recognising when other people are in different zones, thus developing better empathy.
- Developing an insight into what might make them move into the different Zones.
- Understanding that emotions, sensory experiences (such as lack of sleep or hunger) and their environment might influence which zone they are in.
- Developing problem-solving skills and resilience.
- Identifying a range of calming and alerting strategies that support them (known as their personal 'toolkit.')

What are the different zones?

Children will be taught about the four different zones.

Blue Zone: low level of arousal; not ready to learn; feels sad, sick, tired, bored, moving slowly.

Green Zone: calm state of alertness; optimal level to learn; feels happy, calm, feeling okay, focused.

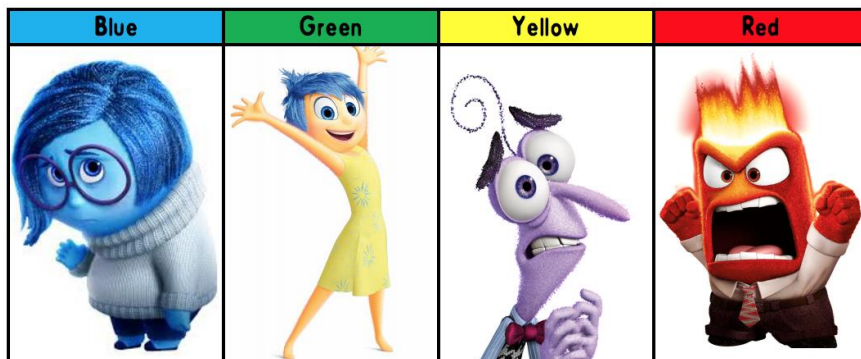
Yellow Zone: heightened state of alertness; elevated emotions; has some control; feels frustrated, worried, silly/wiggly, excited, loss of some control.

Red Zone: heightened state of alertness and intense emotions; not an optimal level for learning; out of control; feels mad/angry, terrified, yelling/hitting, elated, out of control.



Depending on the age of the children, we may show them different pictorial representations of this.

The colours will remain the same.



We will teach the children that everyone experiences all of the zones at different times in their life.

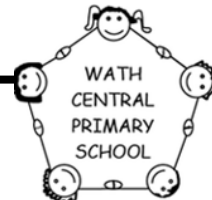
We will teach them that the **Red** and **Yellow** zones are not 'bad' or 'naughty' zones - all of the zones are expected at one time or another. For example; the **Blue Zone** is helpful when you are trying to fall asleep.

How will children be taught the Zones of Regulation?

The Zones of Regulation rolled out through Wath Central Primary School beginning towards the end of F2.

For some children this will be taught as a class – other children will learn this in smaller, more focused groups. Children who benefit from over-learning are likely to do both.

We are aiming to have completed our roll-out as a school by the end of this academic year. Once this has been rolled out we will be using the zones language as part of daily school life. We are aware that some children might prefer not to use the 'zones language' and may instead choose to label the emotions directly – this is completely fine.



Common questions from Parents/Carers relating to the Zones of Regulation

Can my child be in more than one zone at the same time?

Yes. It's completely normal to be in more than one zone at a time. A child being able to list more than one zone and explain will show a really good understanding of their personal feelings and levels of alertness. For example: your child may be feeling tired (**Blue Zone**) because they did not get enough sleep, and also a little anxious (**Yellow Zone**) because they are worried about a spelling test at school.

Should children be punished for being in the **Red Zone?**

It's best for children to experience the natural consequences of being in the **Red** Zone. If a child's actions/choices hurt someone or destroys property, they are likely to need to repair the relationship and take responsibility for the mess they create. Realistically, this can only happen once the child has moved out of the **Red Zone**. Once the child has calmed down, use the experience as a learning opportunity to process to talk through what the child would do differently next time and give them an opportunity to restore their relationship.

Can you look like one Zone on the outside and feel like you are in another Zone on the inside?

Absolutely! Many of us "disguise" our Zone to match social expectations. We use the expression "put on a happy face" or mask the emotion so other people will have good thoughts about us or not worry about it.

Parents often say that their children "lose it" and goes into the **Red Zone** as soon as they get home. This is because children are increasing their awareness of their peers and expectations when in the classroom. They make every effort to keep it together at school to stay in the **Green Zone**. Home is when they feel safe to let it all out.

Where can I find out more about the Zones of Regulation?

www.zonesofregulation.com

www.weareteachers.com/zones-of-regulation-activities

<https://www.theottoolbox.com/?s=zones+of+regulation>

The Zones of Regulation - An Overview of The Zones for Parents (hes-extraordinary.com)