

Zones of Regulation

The Greville Primary School

What are the Zones of Regulation?

The Zones of Regulation is a widely recognised program designed to support children in recognising and managing their emotions. At The Greville Primary School, the Zones of Regulation has been introduced as a whole school initiative and acts as a framework for our children to develop self-regulation in order to help them thrive during the school day.

The Zones of Regulation teaches children to identify different emotions, recognise events that might be 'triggering' make them move into a different zone and provides them with a personal toolkit that they can use to help regulate and manage their feelings.

What are the different zones?

When children (or adults) are in one of the zones, they might feel...

Blue Zone: a lower state of alertness, not ready to learn, tired, bored, sick or sad

Green Zone: a calm state of alertness, optimal level to learn, feeling calm, happy and focused

Yellow Zone: heightened state of alertness, may feel wiggly, silly, anxious, frustrated or excited

Red Zone: high state of alertness and intense emotions, could present as out of control, angry, elated

It's really important to note that no zone is the 'good' or 'best' zone. All zones are ok

How we teach the Zones of Regulation

We explicitly teach the Zones of regulation at the beginning of every academic year. Children will take part in 18 sessions that are delivered over the Autumn Term by their class teacher. We also use 'zones language' as part of our daily school life to reinforce, embed and celebrate learning. Children are also encouraged twice a day to 'check in' with their emotions to try and identify how they are feeling and why. Each class teacher has come up with their own way to 'check in'. Below are some lovely examples:



What can I do to support the Zones of Regulation at home?

- Identify your own feelings using zones language in front of your child (e.g. 'I am feeling a bit frustrated because..., I am in the yellow zone.')
- Talk about the tool that you might use to regulate to return to an appropriate zone (e.g. 'I'm going to go for a walk or take some deep breaths because I want to get back to the green zone.')
- Sometimes, deliberately wonder out loud what zone your child is in (e.g. 'You look sleepy, I think you're in the blue zone – why don't we...'; 'You're a little fidgety, I think you're in the yellow zone – why don't we...')
- Provide positive reinforcement when you see your child is actively trying to remain in the green zone (e.g. 'I can see you're working really hard to stay in the green zone by...')
- Reinforce/ teach your child which zone tools they can use (e.g. 'It's almost time for bed, let's read a book together on the sofa together to help us get in the blue zone.')
- Have visuals up around the house (breathing techniques, brain breaks etc.)
- Have regular check-ins at different points throughout the day 'How're you feeling? How could you get back into the green zone?'
- Play emotions charades – practise identifying and acting out different feelings to broaden vocabulary.
- When watching a film, ask your child to see if they can identify the emotions of characters and why they might be feeling that way.
- Create a calm box with items in that your child can use when they feel like they are in the yellow or red zone.

Tips for practicing the Zones of Regulation

- Know yourself and how you react in difficult situations before dealing with your child's behaviours.
- Know your child's sensory threshold. We all process sensory information differently and it impacts our reactivity to situations.
- Know your child's triggers and share with other family members or those they regularly come into contact with.
- Be consistent in managing your child's behaviour.

- Empathise with your child and validate what they are feeling.
- Have clear boundaries/ routines and always follow through.
- Discuss strategies for the next time when you are in a similar situation.
- Remember to ask you child how their choices made you feel (developing empathy)
- Praise your child for using strategies. Encourage your child to take a sensory break to help regulate their bodies.
- Do not deal with an angry/ upset child when you are not yet calm yourself.
- Think about how you word certain phrases when speaking to your child at challenging moments:
 - Stop running —————> stand next to me
 - Don't talk to me like that —————> Let's talk in our quiet voice/ let's talk about it calmy
 - Stop being silly —————> Let's use our words to explain how we feel

Frequently Asked Questions

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



Yes. Your child may feel tired (Blue Zone) because they didn't get enough sleep and anxious (Yellow Zone) because they are worried about an activity at school the next day. When a child can list more than one zone, it shows they have a good grasp on identifying and categorising their own emotions.

Is the red zone the bad zone?

No. It's really important that children aren't taught that the good zone is the green zone, rather they are taught that *all zones are ok* Each zone serves a purpose for a different emotion. You can be in the red zone and feel overjoyed and elated!



Toolkit ideas

Blue Zone	Green Zone	Yellow Zone	Red Zone
			
How might you feel?	How might you feel?	How might you feel?	How might you feel?
Sad Tired Bored Moving slowly	Happy OK Focused Ready to learn	Nervous Excited Silly Not ready to learn	Angry Frustrated Elated Out of control
What might help you?	How can you stay here?	What might help you?	What might help you?
Talk to someone Stretch Take a brain break Stand up and wiggle Have a drink of water	You've made it to the Green Zone! Can you help anyone else get here too? Good listening, being kind, offer help.	Talk to someone Count to 20 Take deep breaths Squeeze/ push something Draw a picture Take a movement break	Take a deep breath Stop and think Ask for help Find a safe space Ask for a break Sensory room

Examples of zones language

- Expected behaviour = behaviour that we would expect to see in certain situations. This behaviour makes others around us feel comfortable and at ease.
- Unexpected behaviour = behaviour that is not expected to see in certain situations. These types of behaviour can make others around us feel uncomfortable and have confused thoughts about the behaviour.
- Trigger = An irritant that causes a child to become less regulated and increases the likelihood of going into the Blue, Yellow or Red Zone.
- Little problems = Problems that only affects one or two people and can be ignored or solved in a matter of minutes.
- Medium problems = Problems some people share that are able to be resolved in an hour to a couple of days.
- Big problems = Problems that many people share and that have no easy, quiet or sometimes pleasant solutions.