

The **ZONES** of Regulation™

RATIONALE

Self-regulation is something everyone continually works on, whether we are aware of it or not. We all encounter trying circumstances that test our limits from time to time. If we are able to recognise when we are becoming less regulated, we are able to do something about it to feel better and get ourselves to a better place. This comes naturally for some, but for others it is a skill that needs to be taught and practised. This is the goal of The Zones of Regulation (or Zones for short). By addressing underlying deficits in emotional and sensory regulation, executive functions, and social cognition, the curriculum is designed to help move children toward independent regulation. The Zones of Regulation incorporates Social Thinking® concepts and numerous visuals to teach children to identify their feelings/level of alertness, understand how their behaviour impacts those around them, and learn what tools they can use to manage their feelings and states. At Street Lane Primary School, we have implemented the Zones of Regulation across the school as a strategy to assist our children in developing skills to maintain and improve their mental and social well-being.

WHAT ARE THE ZONES OF REGULATION?

The Zones is a systematic, cognitive behaviour approach used to teach self-regulation by categorising all the different ways we feel and states of alertness we experience into four concrete zones. The Zones curriculum provides strategies to teach children to become more aware of, and independent in controlling their emotions and impulses, managing their sensory needs, and improving their ability to problem solve conflicts.



The Four Zones: Our Feelings & States Determine Our Zone

The **Red Zone** is used to describe extremely heightened states of alertness and intense emotions. A person may be elated or experiencing anger, rage, explosive behaviour, devastation, or terror when in the Red Zone.

The **Yellow Zone** is also used to describe a heightened state of alertness and elevated emotions; however, one has some control when they are in the Yellow Zone. A person may be experiencing stress, frustration, anxiety, excitement, silliness, the wiggles, or nervousness when in the Yellow Zone.

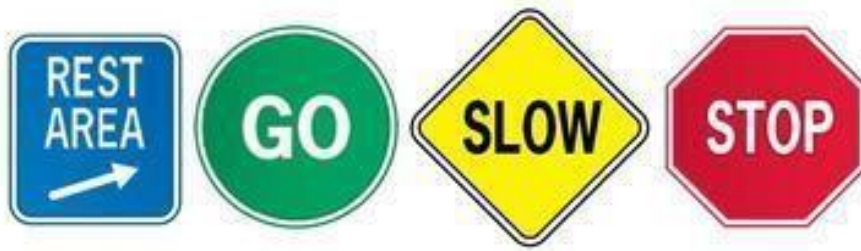
The **Green Zone** is used to describe a calm state of alertness. A person may be described as happy, focused, content, or ready to learn when in the Green Zone. This is the zone where optimal learning occurs.

The **Blue Zone** is used to describe low states of alertness and down feelings, such as when one feels sad, tired, sick, or bored.

VISUAL REPRESENTATION OF THE FOUR ZONES

The ZONES of Regulation

			
Blue Zone Sad Bored Tired Sick	Green Zone Happy Focused Calm Proud	Yellow Zone Worried Frustrated Silly Excited	Red Zone overjoyed/Elated Panicked Angry Terrified



The Zones can be compared to traffic signs. When given a green light or in the Green Zone, one is “good to go”. A yellow sign means be aware or take caution, which applies to the Yellow Zone. A red light or stop sign means stop, and when one is the Red Zone, this often is the case. The Blue Zone can be compared to the rest area signs where one goes to rest or re-energise. All of the zones are expected at one time or another, but the curriculum focuses on teaching children how to manage their Zone based on the environment and people around them.

It is ok to have red zone feelings, but the correct ‘accepted’ strategies need to be chosen (eg ask for help, take a breath, time out) not the red ‘unacceptable’ behaviours (eg hitting, screaming, swearing).

SYSTEM FOR IMPLEMENTING THE ZONES OF REGULATION

- Starts with teaching the difference between feelings and behaviours in all zones
- Teaching accepted and unaccepted behaviours in all zones
- Develop tool-box strategies for all zones
- Implement self-monitoring tools, tracking tools for teachers, and a system for monitoring progress towards the development of self-regulation skills
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STRATEGIES TO HELP SELF-REGULATION

At Street Lane Primary School, teachers are expected to teach a series of lessons to the children on the Zones of Regulation.

There are many strategies we can teach our children to help them to self-regulate. The following are a few examples from the program. The children should be able to select up from 3-5 strategies from their toolbox they can use to regulate their emotions.



- Calm area in the classroom
- Breathing strategies- lazy 8 breathing or the 6 sides of breathing
- Having a break
- Going for a walk
- Squeezing an object or using a fidget tool to self-soothe
- Counting to 10
- Listening to music
- Changing the activity
- Talking to an adult
- Writing or drawing in a doodle book
- Having a hug with a trusted adult

RESOURCES

The Zones of Regulation has a resource book and we have 1 copy in school. All resources have also been placed on the shared drive in the folder 'Zones of Regulation'. Each class has a Zones folder with printouts and plans in. Posters are to be displayed within each classroom and teachers must implement a method that children can use to communicate the zone they are in at any given time. Eg peg/Velcro face/name on class poster, individual bookmark etc

COMMON LANGUAGE

At Street Lane Primary School, we will use common language of the Zones, in identifying our feelings and children will be able to select from learnt strategies (tools) to assist them if needing to transition to a different zone. This will be particularly true for children in the red zone.

I am in the _____ zone.

I feel_____.

The tool I will use is _____.

Examples:

"This is really frustrating me and making me go into the yellow zone. I need to use a tool to calm down. I will take some deep breaths."

"I am feeling angry/upset. I am in the red zone. I will sit in the chill out area and use a fidget/stress ball to help me to calm down."

**Zones of Regulation Policy
May 2023**

