

The Zones are split into four colours:

**Red Zone:** Extremely heightened sense of alertness and intense emotions.

**Yellow Zone:** Similar to the red zone, however children will feel slightly more in control of their emotions.

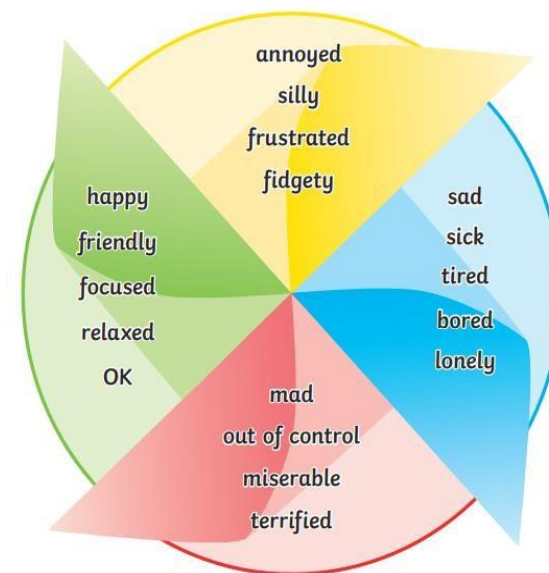
**Green Zone:** Calm sense of alertness.

**Blue Zone:** Low states of alertness and down feelings.

Zones of Regulation is a framework designed to foster self-regulation and emotional control.

It aims to support children with categorising the different ways they feel, teaching them how to control their emotions.

There are no 'bad' zones. Everyone will experience time in each of the zones throughout their life. It is how we manage our emotions and behaviours when in these zones that is important.



## Zones of Regulation

When referring to Zones of Regulation, we can best support children through:

- Talking about the concepts of the zones in a variety of environments;
- Helping them gain awareness of their zones and feelings by telling them;
- Validating what zone they are.

*'I understand you are feeling in the red zone, and that is OK, however we cannot hurt other people'.*

*'I am so pleased you have said you are happy which means you are in the green zone'.*

*'I imagine that because you are feeling sick you are probably in the blue zone today, and that is ok'.*

- Encouraging them to refer to the zones with regards to how they are feeling;
- Positively reinforcing them for recognising their zones and managing their behaviours while in it (do not only point out the Red Zone behaviours).

Referring to the Zones of Regulation can support children to:

- Look at their thoughts and feelings more objectively;
- Change their negative thinking patterns into positive ones;
- Recognise unrealistic thoughts and change them;
- Change behaviours that are interfering with everyday life.

It can also help with developing the following skills:

- sensory regulation;
- emotional self-understanding and self-regulation;
- impulse control;
- sustaining attention;
- problem solving;
- social thinking;
- self-awareness.

Activities to support children depending on what zone they are in:

### Green Zone Activities

*Calm sense of alertness.*

- Encouraging pupils to maintain and preserve concentration;
- Fidget toys or DIY stress balls;
- Colouring in calming pictures.

### Yellow Zone Activities

*Similar to the red zone, however children will feel slightly more in control of their emotions.*

- Space to reflect and think about their emotions;
- Practising breathing - Star Breathing, Butterfly Breathing etc.
- Mindfulness;
- Exercise;
- Rolling playdoh;
- Smelling different smells;
- Sensory Jars;
- Pressing palms together as hard as you can.

### Blue Zone Activities

*Low states of alertness and down feelings*

- Being outdoors in the fresh air;
- Exercise, especially Yoga for increasing concentration levels;
- Sensory Break Games;
- Discussing negative thoughts and how we can turn these into positive ones;
- Listening to upbeat music;
- Reading a favourite book;
- Talking to a trusted adult.

*Talking to a trusted adult*

### Red Zone Activities:

*Extremely heightened sense of alertness and intense emotions.*

- Listening to favourite music using headphones;
- Focusing on the clock and counting the seconds;
- Undertaking activities that exert high levels of energy: running, skipping, jumping;
- Reflecting on feelings using a journal or similar;
- Moving to a new environment or area;
- Placing something in hand to feel it's weight, texture, temperature (e.g a pebble).

## General Activities to support understanding of emotions:

### Above and below the line

Discussion regarding behaviours that are 'acceptable' and 'unacceptable' but referring to 'red' and 'green'. Children can make their own chart to show behaviours that are specific to them when they are in the 'red' and 'green'.

### When I feel... I can...?

Activity to identify how children can react to a given emotion. For example, 'when I feel angry, I can count to 5'. This can be completed as a drawing / painting / cutting and sticking exercise or simply a conversation.

### Mindfulness Activities

#### Social stories focusing on self-regulation

#### Feelings Pictures

A picture of something specific (a tree, a beach, a plate of food - anything). Ask children to 'plot' on the picture where they are feeling. This will prompt discussions as to why they are feeling like that (for example a child may plot themselves at the bottom of the tree and you would then discuss why they are feeling this way).

#### If you were a... ? game

For example, if you were a drink, what would you be? (I would be a coca cola because I feel ready to pop).

If you were a mode of transport, what would you be? (I would be a boat because I feel like I am bobbing up and down).

If you were an animal, what would you be? (I would be dolphin because I am smiling).

#### What can you... ? game

Take 1 minute to sit quietly. Concentrate on the following:

1 thing they can hear, 1 thing they can smell, 1 thing they can taste, 1 thing they can see, 1 thing they can feel.

Then explain to children that if ever they are not feeling themselves (regardless of emotion), they can do this to bring them back to the present moment.

#### Things That Make Me Happy

This can be represented in whatever way the child would like - for example building things out of lego, construction, painting, recycling etc.