

The **ZONES** of Regulation®

A guide for parents

Zones of Regulation is a primary based emotion coaching resource aimed to educate children about their emotions and other people's emotions. It works on the premise that children can't identify their own emotions if they can't see them in other people first. In total there are 18 lessons that all children will take part in, which have been adapted for the different ages of our children. The expected outcome is that children will be able to place themselves emotionally into one of the four zones, and be able to identify the zones of those around them. This will then give children a greater ability to regulate their own emotions and have self-calming strategies.

We are using Zones of Regulation across the whole of Hawthorn to support children to understand their emotions and feelings. We feel this is valuable for all children, especially as we've experienced unprecedented times recently. This guide outlines the key concepts of what the children will be learning over 18 sessions, taught by their class teacher. It may also be something you want to use in the home to support conversations about feelings or behaviours.

The Four Zones

In essence, Zones of Regulation is based on the idea that we all are in one of four zones at all times. It is explained to children in the following way:

Blue Zone

When you're in the **blue zone**, your body is running slow. This could be because you feel sick, tired, sad or bored.

Green Zone

When you're in the **green zone**, you're good to go! You could feel happy, calm and focused.

Yellow Zone

When you're in the **yellow zone**, you need to be careful and slow down. This is because you are starting to lose control. You could feel worried, frustrated, overwhelmed, wiggly, silly or excited. Yellow means a time for caution.

Red Zone

When you're in the **red zone**, you need to STOP. You feel extreme emotions such as anger, aggression, terror and elation. These are emotions that heighten your sense of excitement or tension. You are out of control and have trouble making good decisions.

No emotion is wrong

It is imperative we teach children that we all feel these emotions and none of them are right or wrong, good or bad. We have and will continually address with the children that being in the red zone isn't bad, naughty or wrong. It's a normal emotion, but it's the reaction to the emotion that can sometimes be wrong. In school, we often talk to the children about the zone that we are in to normalise it, and explain why we feel this way and how we can get ourselves back to green. We'd encourage parents to do the same so children understand that we all feel these emotions.

Placing emotions into zones

In the classrooms, we have traffic lights up with the different emotions on them so children can identify the zones. These are where the emotions fit into the coloured zones.

Blue Zone	Green Zone	Yellow Zone	Red Zone
Tired	Happy	Silly	Elated
Sleepy	Focused	Wiggly	Frightened
Poorly	Ready to learn	Frustrated	Mad/angry
Depressed	Calm	Excited	Shouting
Sad	Feeling okay	Cross	Hitting out
Exhausted	Content	Worried	Out of control
		Loss of some control	Terrified/frightened
		Scared	

Sessions in school

Throughout the 18 sessions the children cover the following themes:

- Me and my Zones
- Reading peoples body language and facial expressions – seeing the zones in others
- What to do in each zone to get back to green – own personal strategies (breathing, talking, walking, colouring etc)
- How the zone that we are in affects others
- How 'big' is a big problem? This helps children to scale issues and be able to rationalise things that happen

Each week our school newsletter will feature an update so you know what your child has been doing this week in their session. You may want to talk about this with your child.

Questions you could ask your children:

Which zones were you in today?

Why were you in the blue/green/yellow/red zone?

How did you managed to get back to green?

How did you feel when you went into the blue/green/yellow/red zone?

What happens to your body when you are in the blue/green/yellow/red zone?