

St Bartholomew's C of E Primary School



Willowcroft, Quorn, Loughborough, LE12 8HQ.

Telephone: (01509) 412250.

Email: office@st-bartholomews.leics.sch.uk

ZONES OF REGULATION

September 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

We have recently introduced our pupils to a programme called the Zones of Regulation. This is to help children recognise their emotions and to give them strategies to help manage their feelings.

Self-regulation can go by many names, such as self-control, self-management and impulse control. It is defined as the best state of alertness of both the body and emotions for the specific situation.

For example, when a child plays on the playground or in a competitive game, it is beneficial to have a higher state of alertness; however, that same state would not be appropriate in the library.

The resources and activities are designed to help the children recognise when they are in the different 'zones', as well as learn how to use strategies to alter or remain in the emotional space they are.

In addition to addressing self-regulation, the children will gain an increased vocabulary of emotional terms, skills in reading other people's facial expressions, perspective about how others see and react to their behaviour, insight into events that trigger their behaviour, calming and alerting strategies, and problem solving skills.

A critical aspect of this is that all teachers and support staff know and understand The Zones language. This creates a comfortable and supportive environment for the children to practise their self-regulation skills. It also helps the children learn the skills more quickly and be more likely to apply them in many situations.



Here are the zones the children have been introduced to:

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.

The zones can be likened to traffic lights:



It is important for the children to know that there is no 'bad' Zone. Everyone experiences all of the zones at different times and in different circumstances. We cannot change the way children feel but we can help them manage their feelings, states and behaviours. Children need to learn it is okay to be angry but it how we deal with our anger appropriately that is important. They also need to recognise that you can be in more than one zone at a time (eg. sad and angry).

How can you help your child use The Zones of Regulation at home?

- Identify your own feelings using Zones language in front of your child (e.g.: 'I'm frustrated. I think I am in the Yellow Zone.')
- Talk about what tool you will use to be in the appropriate Zone (e.g.: "I need to take four deep breaths to help me.")
- At times, wonder which Zone your child is in. Or, discuss which Zone a character in a film / book might be in. (e.g.: "You look sleepy. Are you in the Blue Zone?")
- Engaging your child in discussion around Zones when they are in the Red Zone is unlikely to be effective. You need to be discussing the different Zones and tools they can use when they are more regulated/calm.
- Teach your child which tools they can use. (eg: "It's time for bed. Let's read a book together in the comfy chair to get you in the Blue Zone.")
- Regular Check-ins. "How are you feeling now?"



- Modelling it is important to remember to show the children how you use tools to regulate within the zones. You might say “I am going to make myself a cup of tea and do some breathing exercises because I am in the blue zone” and afterwards tell your child how using those tools helped you.
- Put up and reference the Zones visuals and tools in your home.
- Praise and encourage your child when they share which Zone they are in.
- Some children might prefer not to use the ‘Zones language’ but label the emotions directly – this is fine and encouraged!

You can find out more about the Zones of Regulation here:

www.zonesofregulation.com

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zZ9X-d3oZvQ>

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

Yours sincerely,



Mrs Sara Taylor

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