



Dear Parents,

At OPS, we are using the Zones of Regulation throughout the school. We teach our students good coping and regulation strategies so they can help themselves when they experience anxiety and stress. In the classroom, sometimes children panic when faced with a tricky learning problem or challenge. By teaching them how to cope with these feelings they are able to tackle learning challenges and build better resilience so they don't give up easily when faced with difficulty. We have attached some information about the Zones of Regulation so that you are aware of the language we are using and are able to support any discussions about this at home.

There are 4 coloured zones to categorise states of alertness and emotional states:

✓ **The Blue Zone** – used to describe low states of alertness, (such as feeling sad, tired, sick or bored. Body/brain is moving sluggishly).

✓ **The Green Zone** – used to describe a regulated state of alertness (such as feeling calm, happy, focussed or content). This zone is generally needed for school work, being social and ready to learn. It shows control.

✓ **The Yellow Zone** – used to describe a heightened state of alertness, but with some control (such as when experiencing stress, frustration, anxiety, excitement, silliness, nervousness, confusion - slightly elevated emotions (being fidgety, wiggly, squirmy or sensory seeking). The person is starting to lose control.

✓ **The Red Zone** – used to describe extremely heightened states of alertness or very intense feelings (such as feeling anger, rage, and explosive behaviour, panic, terror or elation). Not being in control of one's own body. You can remember the zones by using a traffic light system.

Like traffic signs;

Blue = 'rest area where you pull over as you are tired and need to recharge'.

Green = the person is 'good to go'

Yellow = 'caution, slow down or take warning'

Red = 'stop and regain control'

Using the Zones of Regulation as a framework, we aim to help children to:

- Recognise when they are in the different Zones and learn how to change or stay in the Zone they are in.
- Increase their emotional vocabulary so they can explain how they are feeling.
- Recognise when other people are in different Zones, thus developing better empathy.
- Develop an insight into what might make them move into the different Zones.
- Understand that emotions, sensory experiences such as lack of sleep or hunger and their environment might influence which Zone they are in.
- Develop problem-solving skills and resilience

Important note - No zone is 'bad' or 'good' and we all experience them at one time or another. It is important to avoid reinforcing the idea that red = bad.

Often we see with our children that they will indicate they're in the green zone, even if they're not. It is important to validate all emotions, and we should be helping our students to identify these emotions

The BLUE zone	The GREEN zone	The YELLOW zone	The RED zone
			
How might you feel?	How might you feel?	How might you feel?	How might you feel?
sad tired bored moving slowly	happy okay focussed ready to learn	nervous confused silly not ready to learn	angry frustrated scared out of control
What might help you?	What might help you?	What might help you?	What might help you?
Talk to someone Stretch Take a brain break Stand Take a walk Close my eyes	The goal of this exercise is to get to the GREEN zone. What can you do to be happy, calm and ready to learn?	Talk to someone Count to 20 Take deep breaths Squeeze something Draw a picture Take a brain break	Stop what I'm doing Make sensible choices Take deep breaths Ask for a break Find a safe space Ask for help



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

- ✓ Model and 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.")
- ✓ Observe your child's behaviour and try to use strategies when they are showing signs of being in the yellow zone, to catch it before they move to the red zone.
- ✓ Practice calming strategies when your child is in the green zone. This may include doing some deep breathing/meditation/heavy work and sensory activities throughout their day.
- ✓ Talk about what tool you will use to be in the appropriate Zone (e.g.: "I need to take four deep breaths to help get me back to the Green Zone.")
- ✓ 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?")
- ✓ Share how their behaviour is affecting your Zone. For example, if they are in the Green Zone, you could comment that their behaviour is also helping you feel happy/ go into the Green Zone.
- ✓ Put up and reference the Zones visuals and tools in your home to consistently refer to and check in regularly with this
- ✓ Praise and encourage your child when they share which Zone they are in.
- ✓ Remember to monitor your language - usually less is best (minimal in the red zone).

If you require any extra information or have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact the school.

Kind Regards

Emily Waldron