

# The Zones of Regulation®

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## Information for Parents and Carers

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# What are the Zones of Regulation?



- ▶ a framework designed to help pupils recognise when they are in different emotional and physical states called **'zones'**
- ▶ supports pupils in consciously regulating their actions
- ▶ leads to increased control and problem solving abilities.
- ▶ each of the 4 zones is represented by a different colour
- ▶ pupils learn how to use strategies or tools to stay in a zone or move from one zone to another. pupils have a toolbox including:
  - ▶ Calming techniques
  - ▶ Cognitive strategies
  - ▶ Sensory supports

What zone am I in?



Use tools to get in the green zone.



Teachers will email you a zones map like this

# WHAT ARE THE ZONES?



There are four zones to describe how our brain and body feel.



**BLUE Zone** – Your body is running slow, such as when you are tired, sick, sad or bored.



**GREEN Zone** – Like a green light, you are “good to go.” Your body may feel happy, calm and focused.



**YELLOW Zone** – This zone describes when you start to lose control, such as when you are frustrated, anxious, worried, giggly, silly or surprised. Use caution when you are in this zone.



**RED Zone** – This zone is for extreme emotions such as anger, terror and aggression. When you are in this zone, you are out of control, have trouble making good decisions and must STOP!



# ZONES OF REGULATION



**BLUE ZONE**  
Low State of Alertness



**GREEN ZONE**  
Ideal State of Alertness



**YELLOW ZONE**  
Heightened State of Alertness



**RED ZONE**  
Extremely Heightened  
State of Alertness



An iceberg floating in the ocean. The tip of the iceberg, which is visible above the water, is jagged and white with some blue shadows. The vast majority of the iceberg is submerged underwater, appearing as a large, dark blue mass. The horizon line is visible in the distance under a clear blue sky.

# Behaviour that we see

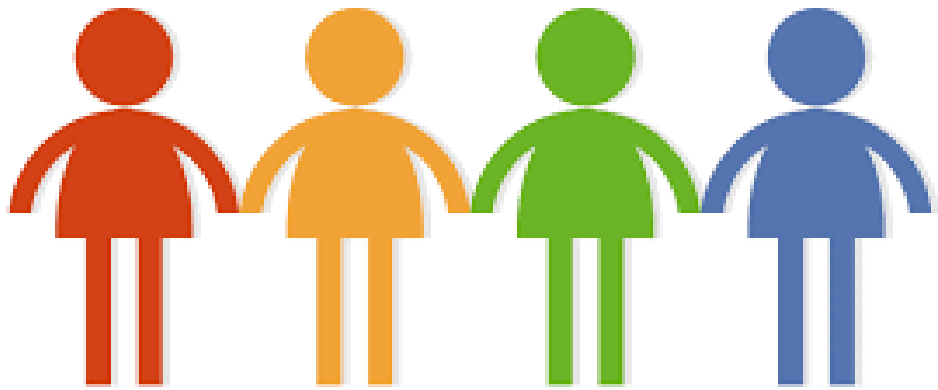
## WHY ? Behaviours from the perspective of autism

- **Social communication difficulties**
- **Restricted or repetitive behaviours or interests**
- **Sensory processing**
- **Learning styles:**
  - Not an implicit learner (needs explicit teaching)
  - Difficulty giving or shifting attention
  - Visual learner (needs concrete visuals and frameworks over auditory instructions)
  - Difficulty with executive functioning (concept of time, sequencing, planning and organising self)
  - Difficulty with joint attention, theory of mind (knowing what others are thinking) & responding to others' emotions

# What does Zones teach?

- ▶ How to recognise a broader range of emotions
- ▶ The perspective of how others see and react to their behaviour
- ▶ Gives insight into events that trigger less regulated states
- ▶ When and how to use tools and problem solving skills

# Who can benefit from Zones?



- ▶ **everyone!** The curriculum can reach a broad population
- ▶ Adults who teach Zones also report a better insight into their own states and become more aware of tools they can use



# What is self-regulation?



Goes by many names – self control, self management, anger control, impulse control



The ability to develop self awareness and adjust our level of alertness and how we display emotions through our behaviour



The ability 'to do what needs to be done' to be in the optimal state for the given situation to remain calm and organised to successfully negotiate the event



To successfully regulate, 3 critical neurological components need to be integrated:

- Sensory processing
- Executive functioning
- Emotional regulation

# Sensory Processing



- ▶ information perceived by your sensory receptors (the nerve endings that respond to stimuli)
- ▶ how you make sense of and organise information so that you can act upon it in a purposeful way
- ▶ includes modulating the amount of sensory input you receive so that you don't become too overwhelmed
- ▶ some may be over sensitive to small amounts of sensation & may have difficulties in being able to filter out unwanted sensory stimuli
- ▶ therefore they need a distraction limited environment
- ▶ In contrast, some children seek out intense sensory input in one or more of their senses to feel just right (eg: spinning, jumping)
- ▶ some need additional movement: heavy work for muscles or deep pressure to their bodies to feel focussed and ready to learn
- ▶ a sensory diet gives meaningful ways to help children to get the right sensory input they need to organise their nervous system and be attentive.
- ▶ **Please ask your teacher for sensory activities you can use at home.**



# Vestibular Input

## ▶ ALERTING

- Fast
- Arrhythmical
- Rotatory movements

## ▶ CALMING

- Slow
- Rhythmical
- Linear movement



# Tips for handling a red zone situation



- ▶ Safety is first priority – make safe
- ▶ Limit verbal interaction (particularly questions and choices – use visuals)
- ▶ This is not a teachable moment - avoid further overload.
- ▶ Avoid power struggles
- ▶ Validate your child's feelings, reassure them.
- ▶ Give them time and space to calm
- ▶ Designated safe spot
- ▶ Process later using the tools map
- ▶ In red zone children cannot process. They are overwhelmed. It can take up to an hour (or longer) before children are fully regulated - emotions can be easily triggered again.
- ▶ Wait and then talk things through. Use zones tools when child is calm.