

## Emotional Regulation and the 'Zones of Regulation'

The 'Zones of Regulation' is a framework that represents our feelings and energy levels. It is a strategy to help with 'self-regulation', which is all about having the right energy level and feelings for a certain situation. Some children can find it difficult to move from one energy level to another e.g. calming down to work after being out for break.

The colours are used to create a visual structure that highlight all types of emotions and can help us to talk to children about how they are feeling.

Green is seen as the ideal state for energy levels, and most often challenging behaviour is seen due to being out of control in the red zone. However, it is important to understand that no zones are all bad; different zones are ok and are expected in different situations.

Zone	Energy Level	Description	Situations it is good
Blue	<b>Low energy</b> Body is running on low	<b>Feeling down, tired, sleepy, bored, sick</b>	<b>Bed time</b>
Green	<b>Low/medium energy</b> Good to go (green light)	<b>Calm, happy, focused, chilled, organised</b>	<b>Classroom, library, theatre</b>
Yellow	<b>Higher energy level</b> Starting to lose focus (caution)	<b>Excited, agitated, nervous, frustrated, silly</b>	<b>Park, football game, performing on stage</b>
Red	<b>Very high energy</b> Big Intense emotions/out of control	<b>Overjoyed, angry, terrified, elated</b>	<b>Surprise birthday party When in danger</b>

### Toolkits

The aim of the 'Zones of Regulation' is to develop **toolkits** that will help children move between the zones or stay in the zone they are in e.g.

- To move from blue to green to be ready to work
- To move from green to blue before bed
- To move from red to yellow to green when something has been frustrating
- To stay in the green zone when doing a favourite activity in class

Every child's toolkit will be different (as everyone respond differently to activities) however they may include:

**Calming techniques:** e.g. taking deep breaths, taking a break/calm corner, yoga, colouring, listening to calm music

**Sensory support:** to calm e.g. hugs, shoulder rubs, weighted blanket or to alert e.g. bouncing on gym ball, jumping jacks, running

**Thinking strategies** e.g. size of the problem, talking time, worry books

