

United Against Bullying School Case Study: Using Zones of Regulation

How Esher Church School used Zones of Regulation

Context of our anti-bullying work

Working with individual children to support them with their behaviour so that they understand how to respect others and can regulate their own emotions.

What we hoped to achieve

For the individual child to feel safe and secure within school and for the number of incidents involving the child to fall so others also feel safe and secure at school.

The action we took

At the start of the year we undertook training on CPOMs, a programme used both for safeguarding and to monitor behaviour across the school. It was clear that early on in the term a number of incidents were taking place involving a particular child. The child was immediately added to our vulnerable children list for the weekly briefings. On investigating these incidents to look for patterns, it became clear that the structured nature of playtimes and lunchtimes were leading to struggles for this particular child.

At this point, we spoke to the school's ELSA and arranged a Chill Out club to occur every day at lunchtime. This was designed to give space to children who struggled on the playground with social situations, giving them a safer space with a trusted adult to work on their social skills. This particular child was guided to the club and attended on a regular basis across the year when he felt he needed it.

It was also identified that he required further ELSA support to help with emotional regulation as, when incidents occurred, he would struggle with his anger. Our ELSA identified the Zones of Regulation as the strategy that would support him best and continued work with him over two terms on this. These strategies were transferred into the classroom so that they became a consistent feature of each lesson. The child was quickly able to talk more about his emotions and, as the year wore on, he was able to control his anger far better and follow other strategies such as walking away or finding a trusted adult if things frustrated him.

Unfortunately, this work was not enough to stop the incidents between him and the other children as incidents kept arising. Therefore, meetings between him and the other children who were regularly involved in clashes were arranged. These allowed the children to talk openly to their peers about their feelings and how the group as a whole could move forward positively. The children were very honest with one another and spoke maturely about how they made each other feel. It brought out the fact that their competitive nature within football stoked some of the incidents and this led to the child becoming angry and the others almost

grouping up to show their annoyance. It became clear that the other children were not totally innocent and were sometimes stoking the fires on purpose as they knew it would get a reaction.

This led the Headteacher to speak to the children about 'bullying' and 'being an innocent bystander'. Parents of all children were contacted and spoken to about what was going on and the fact that children were regularly grouping up against the child.

The child was given a key adult who checked in with him regularly and was also a member of the lunchtime team so they could also keep an eye out for how things were going, especially during the football days. It was at this point that everything picked up behaviourally between the boys.

In an effort to increase the child's self-esteem, we ensured they were part of the swimming galas entered this year. The final gala was at a particularly difficult point and we able to use this to really buoy him. The child won all of their races, and this happened to then be picked up in the whole school circle time the following week. In front of this peers, he was able to talk with real passion about his experiences and was congratulated by all the other children on his achievements. The school also celebrated these in the newsletter that week.

ELSA and specific behaviour strategies remained in place for the boy for the rest of the year as he still required the support.

Impact and outcomes of the work

- All children and families felt supported during the process
- Behavioural incidents reduced in the end meaning that all children were happier and able to better access their learning.
- The classroom was easier to manage and not as much of the teacher's and SLT's time was having to be directed towards the incidents
- Staff felt supported throughout by the work of the ELSA and SLT

What we have learned

Zones of Regulation has worked extremely well, and it would be good to run this out across the whole school for all children.