



Long-Term Subject Sequencing Plan

Subject Name: GRIT/Thrive

Subject Leader: Dora Grcic

Curriculum Intent:

The GRIT curriculum at Fountains High School is a research-informed programme designed to develop students' capacity for emotional self-regulation, metacognition, and mental wellbeing. It is rooted in the belief that resilience, optimism, and self-awareness are foundational to both academic success and personal growth.

GRIT targets five key developmental domains:

- **Academic (A)** – building learning dispositions and cognitive strategies
- **Self-Regulation (SR)** – understanding and managing emotional states
- **Metacognition (M)** – thinking about thinking and learning how to learn
- **Mental Health (MH)** – recognising and responding to mental health needs
- **Wellbeing (W)** – fostering a positive outlook and sense of purpose

This curriculum intent also fosters:

- **KIND HEARTS:** by embedding empathy, compassion, and emotional literacy into every aspect of the curriculum, enabling students to understand themselves and others with care and respect.
- **WISE MINDS:** through the development of metacognitive strategies, critical thinking, and self-awareness, helping students to become reflective and purposeful learners.
- **BRAVE SOULS:** by encouraging resilience, self-advocacy, and the courage to face challenges, empowering students to navigate life with confidence and determination.

The GRIT curriculum is inclusive, accessible, and empowering. It supports students in developing a strong sense of self, the ability to advocate for their needs, and the resilience to thrive in education and beyond.

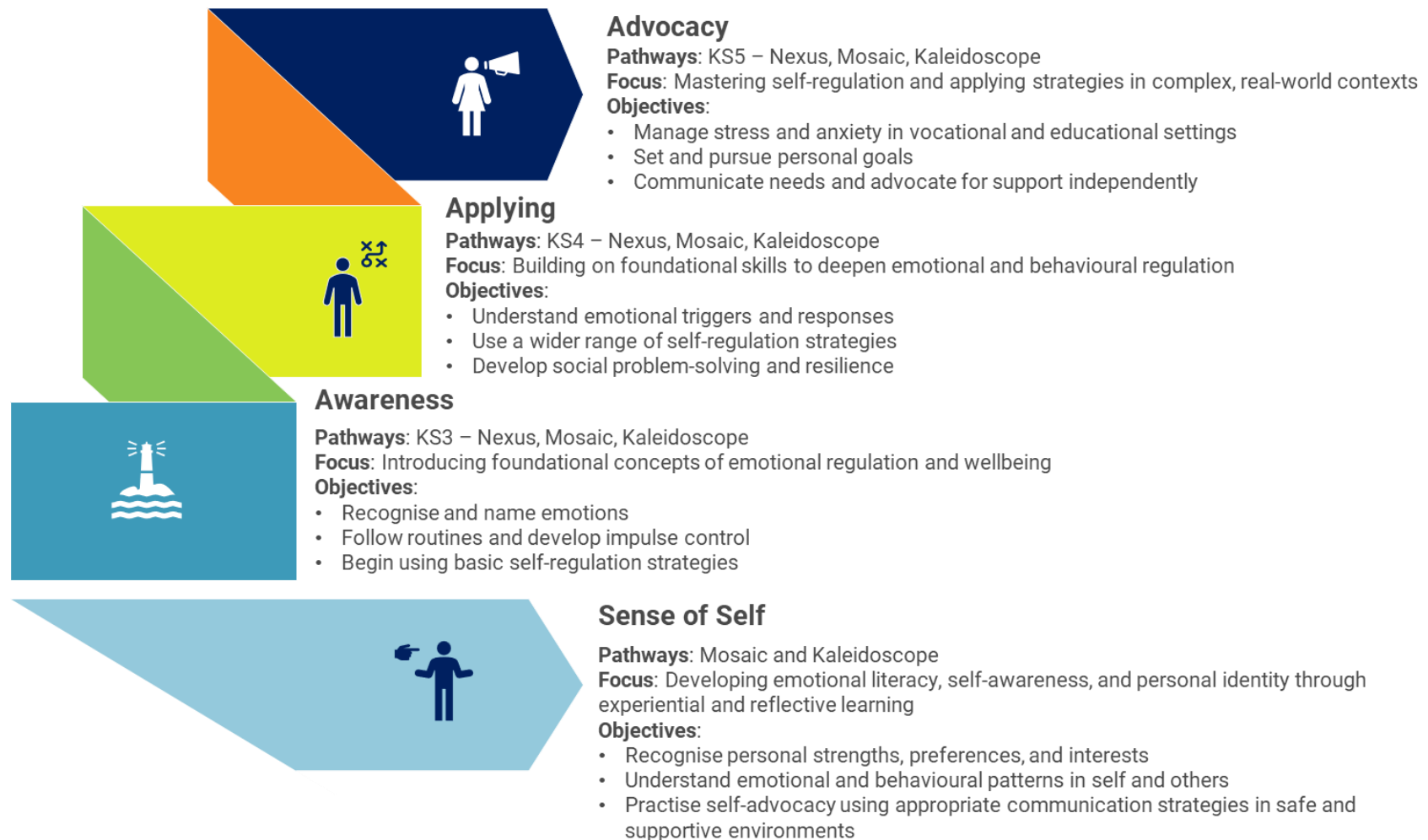
The curriculum draws on a wide range of psychological and educational frameworks, including:

Zones of Regulation (SR) The Zones is a systematic, cognitive behavioural approach used to teach self-regulation by categorising all the different ways we feel and states of alertness we experience into four concrete coloured zones. The Zones framework provides strategies to teach students to become more aware of and independent in controlling their emotions and impulses, manage their sensory needs, and improve their ability to problem solve conflicts.	Thrive (SR, A) The Thrive Approach is informed by established developments in neuroscientific research. It is underpinned by a theoretical base in child development theory and attachment theory. At its heart is the understanding that all children's behaviour represents a form of communication - of their underlying needs. If these needs are recognised and met, children and young people will be able to flourish and learn.	Habits of Mind (M, A, SR) The Habits of Mind are a set of 16 dispositions and behaviours identified by Art Costa and Bena Kallick that help pupils successfully approach problems and challenges in the classroom and in everyday life. Within school we started our metacognitive journey and during the year we will be introducing 6 habits of mind: listening with understanding and empathy, thinking about your thinking, thinking flexibly, responding with wonderment and awe, thinking independently and gather data through senses.	Mental Health First Aid (MH) Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) is an internationally recognised course designed to teach people how to spot the signs and symptoms of mental ill health and provide support. Within school we have trained mental health first aiders that that can provide interventions for those in need. The inclusion of this support system in the GRIT curriculum is to teach young people about different forms of mental ill health, its causes and the support systems available to them.
Polyvagal Theory (SR) The Polyvagal Theory links the evolution of the mammalian autonomic nervous system to social behaviour and emphasises the importance of physiological state in the expression of behavioural issues. By stimulating the vagus nerve, you can send a message to your body that it's time to relax and de-stress, which leads to long-term improvements in mood, wellbeing and resilience. Increasing vagal tone can help to overcome anxiety and depression, and better manage them when they arise.	Positive Psychology (W, A) Positive Psychology is focused on the character strengths and behaviours that allow individuals to build a life of meaning and purpose—to move beyond surviving to flourishing. With a more joyful outlook on life, he explains that we're in a much better position to enhance our well-being. Research shows that those with greater levels of optimism enjoy improved health, higher levels of motivation and performance and better chances of career success.	Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (SR, MH) Cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) is a talking therapy that can help you manage your problems by changing the way you think and behave. It's most commonly used to treat anxiety and depression, but can be useful for other mental and physical health problems. Within school we aim to introduce pupils to some basic CBT based activities that can assist pupils in recognising how they can adapt their negative thought patterns to improve the way they feel.	Oracy (A, SR, M) The term 'oracy' was coined in the 1960s by Andrew Wilkinson. His notion was that oracy – the ability to express oneself fluently in speech. In school, oracy is a powerful tool for learning; by teaching students to become more effective speakers and listeners we empower them to better understand themselves, each other and the world around them. It is also a route to social mobility, empowering all students, not just some, to find their voice to succeed in school and life (Voice21 2022). At the Fountains we are expanding this to all of the ways of communication, including Makaton, communication devices, speech and other ways our students use to communicate.

Delivery Model: GRIT is delivered through one 45-minute lesson per week. Thrive principles underpin all lessons. Each half term includes one dedicated Thrive session and one assessment/reflection session. This ensures students receive both theoretical understanding and practical emotional regulation experiences.

Progression Model

The GRIT curriculum is sequenced across three developmental stages, each aligned with pathway and Key Stage progression:



Nexus – Key Stage 3

Curriculum Note: This Key Stage 3 GRIT plan introduces pupils to foundational emotional regulation concepts using the **Zones of Regulation** framework. The curriculum is sequenced to build understanding of physiological, emotional, and cognitive states across the zones, supported by **Habits of Mind, positive psychology, and brain science**.

Each half-term focuses on a specific zone, gradually layering strategies for self-awareness, emotional literacy, and resilience. Pupils begin with basic concepts like “flipping your lid” and progress toward identifying and managing complex emotions such as anxiety and anger.

Adaptations include:

- **Visual scaffolding** (e.g. emotion charts, breathing visuals)
- **Sensory integration** (e.g. mindfulness walks, starfish breathing)
- **Concrete tools** (e.g. coping kits, mood charts)

The plan supports pupils in developing a **sense of self**, building vocabulary around emotions, and applying strategies in increasingly independent ways.

Assessment is formative, using the GRIT questionnaire, Thrive Online assessment and reflective activities to track emotional growth.

Half Term Focus	Core Knowledge	Key Skills	Links to other Learning (Including National Curriculum)	Evaluation/Assessment	Notes/Adaptations
Autumn 1	Introduction to the Zones of Regulation; Brain Science (Hand model, Triune brain, Flipping our lids); Mental Health; Positive Psychology (Gratitude, Journaling); Vagus Nerve (function and strategies); Goal Setting and Accountability; HoM: Thinking Flexibly; Group Thrive activities	Emotional literacy; Self-awareness; Reflective thinking; Strategy identification; Flexible thinking	PSHE: Mental health and wellbeing; Science: Brain structure and function; RSE: Emotional regulation; PE: Physical wellbeing strategies	GRIT questionnaire A1; Thrive Online assessment-baseline; Journaling and reflection tasks	Use visual models and sensory tools; Scaffolded vocabulary; Introduce breathing and journaling with adult support
Autumn 2	Blue Zone – Hypo-Arousal (Physiological, Relational, Cognitive); Depression; Empathy and Compassion; Positive/Negative Thoughts; Strategies: Bee Breathing, Smiling; HoM: Listening with Understanding and Empathy; Group Thrive activities	Empathy; Self-regulation; Emotional identification; Breathing techniques	PSHE: Emotional wellbeing; RSE: Relationships and empathy; Science: Mental health	Observations; Thrive Online assessment; Strategy application	Use of emotion cards and breathing visuals; Thrive sessions to reinforce empathy
Spring 1	Green Zone – Optimal Arousal (Physiological, Relational, Cognitive); Wellbeing and Self-Care; Emotional	Self-care; Emotional literacy;	PSHE: Wellbeing and self-care; PE: Exercise	Mood charts; Journals; Strategy logs	Incorporate sensory walks and affirmations; Use humour to build resilience

	Literacy; Strategies: Mindfulness Walk, Meditation, Moderate Exercise, Affirmations; HoM: Finding Humour; Group Thrive activities	Mindfulness; Physical regulation	and health; Art: Mood and expression		
Spring 2	Yellow Zone – Hyper-Arousal (Physiological, Relational, Cognitive); Anxiety and Coping Skills; Stress and Eustress; Coping Kit; Strategies: 4-7-8 Breathing, Humming, Gargling; HoM: Responding with Wonderment and Awe; Thrive activities	Anxiety identification; Stress management; Coping strategy development	PSHE: Mental health and anxiety; Science: Stress response; RSE: Self-regulation	Coping kit creation; GRIT reflections; Thrive Online Assessment	Introduce vagus nerve strategies; Use calming sensory inputs
Summer 1	Red Zone – Hyper-Arousal (Physiological, Relational, Cognitive); Anger and Conduct Disorder; Emotional Vocabulary; Growth Mindset and Resilience; Strategies: Cold Therapy, Starfish Breathing, Singing/Chanting; HoM: Managing Impulsivity; Thrive activities	Anger management; Resilience; Vocabulary building; Impulse control	PSHE: Behaviour and resilience; RSE: Emotional regulation; Music: Chanting and rhythm	Behaviour logs; Strategy journals	Role-play scenarios; Use visuals and calming techniques
Summer 2	Consolidation of Zones; Application of Strategies; Brain Science – Fight, Flight, Freeze; Final GRIT Questionnaire; HoM: Gather Data Through Senses; Thrive activities	Strategy recall; Emotional regulation; Sensory awareness	PSHE: Consolidation and review; Science: Brain response; RSE: Self-awareness	GRIT questionnaire Final; Strategy review; Thrive Online Assessment	Multi-sensory review activities; Encourage independent strategy selection

Nexus – Key Stage 4

Curriculum note: The KS4 GRIT curriculum builds on KS3 foundations by introducing adolescent-specific content such as the teenage brain, exam stress, peer pressure, and self-esteem. The Zones of Regulation remain central, but are now contextualised within real-life challenges and social-emotional dilemmas relevant to teenagers.

Key skills include:

- Advanced emotional literacy (e.g. linking thoughts, emotions, and behaviours)
- Self-regulation in social contexts (e.g. bullying, peer pressure)
- Resilience and goal setting (e.g. positivity projects, Thrive sessions)

The curriculum is designed to foster metacognition and self-advocacy, helping pupils understand their triggers and apply strategies independently. Thrive group sessions are embedded to reinforce relational and emotional learning.

Adaptations include:

- Scenario-based learning (e.g. role-play around peer conflict)
- Flexible grouping for Thrive sessions
- Personalised positivity projects to showcase growth

Assessment includes GRIT questionnaires, Thrive Online assessment, reflective journals, and project-based evaluations. The curriculum prepares pupils for increasing autonomy and emotional maturity.

Half Term Focus	Core Knowledge	Key Skills	Links to other Learning (Including National Curriculum)	Evaluation/Assessment	Notes/Adaptations
Autumn 1	Introduction to Zones of Regulation; GRIT Questionnaire A1; Teenage Brain; Mental Health for Teenagers; Goal Setting and Responsibility; Gratitude (expression and practice); Vagus Nerve (function and strategies); Thrive Group Session	Emotional literacy; Self-awareness; Responsibility; Reflective thinking; Strategy identification	PSHE: Mental health and wellbeing; Science: Brain development; RSE: Emotional regulation; Thrive: relational development	GRIT questionnaire A1; Journaling; Thrive Online assessment	Use adolescent-relevant scenarios; Scaffold goal setting with visual prompts
Autumn 2	Blue Zone – Hypo-Arousal; Depression; Empathy, Sympathy, Compassion; Sleep and its impact; Positive/Negative Thoughts; Guided Meditation; Thrive Group Session; HoM: Listening with Understanding and Empathy; Thrive Group Session	Empathy; Emotional regulation; Sleep hygiene; Guided relaxation	PSHE: Emotional wellbeing; Science: Sleep and mental health; RSE: Relationships	Thrive input; Guided meditation logs; Thrive Online assessment	Introduce sleep routines and breathing strategies; Use emotion cards

Spring 1	Green Zone – Optimal Arousal; Emotional Literacy for Teenagers; Link between Thoughts, Emotions, and Behaviour; Kindness and Acts of Kindness; Strategies: Mindfulness Walk, Meditation, Moderate Exercise; Thrive Group Session; HoM: Thinking Flexibly; Thrive Group Session	Emotional literacy; Kindness; Physical regulation; Metacognition	PSHE: Kindness and wellbeing; PE: Exercise and health; RSE: Emotional development	Journals; Thrive reflections; Kindness project; Thrive Online assessment	Use real-life kindness examples; Scaffold emotional links
Spring 2	Yellow Zone – Hyper-Arousal; Anxiety and Exam Stress; Stress vs Eustress; Coping Kit; Confidence, Self-Esteem, Mental Health; Strategies: 4-7-8 Breathing, Humming, Gargling; Thrive Group Session; HoM: Taking Responsible Risks; Thrive Group Session	Stress management; Confidence building; Coping strategy development	PSHE: Anxiety and stress; Careers: Exam preparation; RSE: Self-esteem	Coping kit creation; Thrive input	Use exam scenarios; Introduce peer support strategies
Summer 1	Red Zone – Hyper-Arousal; Anger and Anger Management; Bullying and Peer Pressure; Strategies: Cold Therapy, Starfish Breathing, Singing/Chanting; Thrive Group Session; HoM: Managing Impulsivity; Thrive Group Session	Anger management; Peer awareness; Impulse control	PSHE: Behaviour and resilience; RSE: Peer relationships; Music: Rhythm and chanting	Behaviour logs; Thrive Online Assessment	Role-play bullying scenarios; Scaffold impulse control

Nexus – Key Stage 5

Curriculum note: At KS5, the GRIT curriculum shifts toward vocational relevance and adult emotional competencies. Pupils explore how emotional regulation applies in college, work, and independent living. The Zones of Regulation are revisited with a focus on application in complex environments.

Themes include:

- Mental health in the workplace
- Teamwork and altruism
- Stress management in vocational settings
- Growth mindset and fixed mindset in adulthood

Habits of Mind are used to promote interdependence, persistence, and reflective thinking. Pupils engage in Thrive sessions tailored to adult transitions and are encouraged to identify personal coping strategies and safe spaces.

Adaptations include:

- Workplace scenarios and case studies
- Vocational goal setting and self-assessment

- Flexible delivery to accommodate college timetables and placements

Assessment is holistic, combining GRIT questionnaires, Thrive Online assessment, and strategy application tasks. The curriculum empowers pupils to navigate adult life with emotional resilience and self-awareness.

Half Term Focus	Core Knowledge	Key Skills	Links to other Learning (Including National Curriculum)	Evaluation/Assessment	Notes/Adaptations
Autumn 1	Introduction to Zones of Regulation; GRIT Questionnaire A1; Transition and Weekly Thrive Group Session; Habits of Mind – What is a habit? Good vs bad habits; Thinking about Thinking (HoM No. 5); Mental Health at College/Work; Positive Psychology and Attitude; Brain/Neuro System – Thinking and Thoughts; Vocational Goal Setting	Emotional literacy; Self-awareness; Habit formation; Metacognition; Vocational planning	PSHE: Mental health and transition; Careers: Goal setting; Science: Brain and cognition	GRIT questionnaire A1; Thrive Online assessment; Goal setting review	Use college/workplace scenarios; Scaffold habit tracking and goal planning
Autumn 2	Blue Zone – Hypo-Arousal; Weekly Thrive Group Session; Depression and Self-Harm; Empathy at Work; Positive/Negative Thoughts; Guided Meditation; HoM: Listening with Understanding and Empathy	Empathy; Emotional regulation; Mental health awareness; Guided relaxation	PSHE: Mental health and wellbeing; RSE: Relationships; Careers: Workplace behaviour	Thrive Online assessment; Meditation logs; Reflections	Use real-life case studies; Introduce self-help strategies and peer support
Spring 1	Green Zone – Optimal Arousal; ; Weekly Thrive Group Session; Self-Care and Wellbeing at Work; Mood and Teamwork; Strategies: Mindfulness, Affirmations, Positive Self-Talk, Mindfulness Walk; HoM: Thinking Flexibly	Self-care; Teamwork; Emotional literacy; Mindfulness	PSHE: Workplace wellbeing; Careers: Collaboration; PE: Physical regulation	Journals; Thrive reflections; Strategy logs	Use workplace scenarios; Scaffold team-building activities
Spring 2	Yellow Zone – Hyper-Arousal; ; Weekly Thrive Group Session; Anxiety and College/Work; Stress and Eustress; Coping Kit and Safety Planning; GRIT Questionnaire Sp2; HoM: Persisting	Stress management; Coping strategy development; Safety awareness	PSHE: Anxiety and stress; Careers: Workplace resilience; RSE: Self-regulation	GRIT questionnaire Sp2; Coping kit review; Thrive Online assessment	Use vocational stress scenarios; Introduce safe space planning
Summer 1	Red Zone – Hyper-Arousal; ; Weekly Thrive Group Session; Anger and Brain Science (Amygdala and Emotions); Anger Management;	Anger management; Teamwork; Relaxation; Altruism	PSHE: Behaviour and resilience; Careers: Vocational kindness;	Behaviour logs; Thrive reflections; Strategy showcase	Use vocational role-play; Scaffold relaxation strategy selection

	Team Building; Relaxation Methods; Altruism and Kindness in Vocational Contexts; HoM: Thinking Interdependently		Science: Brain and emotion		
Summer 2	Consolidation of Zones; Brain Science – Fight, Flight, Freeze; Weekly Thrive Group Session; Mental Health Reflection; Positive Psychology Strategy Application; Vagus Nerve Strategies; Growth vs Fixed Mindset; GRIT Questionnaire Final; HoM: Gather Data Through Senses	Strategy application; Reflection; Growth mindset; Sensory awareness	PSHE: Consolidation and review; Careers: Mindset and planning	GRIT questionnaire Final; Thrive Online assessment; Strategy review	Encourage independent strategy selection; Use visual and sensory review tools

Mosaic & Kaleidoscope

Curriculum note: The Mosaic and Kaleidoscope GRIT curriculum is designed to introduce and embed emotional regulation strategies through highly accessible, sensory-rich, and visually supported learning experiences. The curriculum follows the Zones of Regulation framework, sequenced across six half-terms to build pupils' understanding of emotional states and equip them with practical tools for self-regulation.

Each zone is explored through:

- Concrete experiences (e.g. making emotion collages, using mirrors, creating fiddle boxes)
- Visual storytelling (e.g. The Colour Monster, Inside Out)
- Sensory activities (e.g. hand massage, breathing techniques, mindfulness walks)

The curriculum prioritises:

- Emotional identification and expression using simplified language and visual cues
- Development of self-awareness and self-regulation through structured routines and choice cards
- Social understanding and empathy via role-play, group activities, and reflection
- Progression is scaffolded from basic recognition of emotions (Autumn 1) to independent application of regulation strategies (Summer 2). Pupils are supported to move from adult-guided responses to autonomous use of calming tools and emotional vocabulary.

Adaptations include:

- Use of multi-sensory resources to support engagement and understanding
- Repetition and modelling to reinforce key concepts
- Personalised regulation tools (e.g. choice cards, emotion bingo, fiddle boxes)

Assessment is primarily observational and formative, focusing on pupils' ability to recognise and communicate emotions, select appropriate self-regulation strategies, and demonstrate increasing independence in managing their emotional wellbeing. Progress is further monitored through individual and group Thrive Online assessments, enabling staff to identify developmental needs, measure growth over time, and tailor support to each learner's emotional and social development.

Half Term Focus	Core Knowledge	Key Skills	Links to other Learning (Including National Curriculum)	Evaluation/Assessment	Notes/Adaptations
Autumn 1 Me and My Feelings	Knowing my name and preferences; Things I like and don't like; The Colour Monster; Everyday feelings (happy, sad, angry, worried); Class routines and expectations	Making choices; Expressing preferences; Recognising basic emotions; Following routines	PSHE: Self-awareness; Communication: Making choices; Art: Colour Monster sensory activities	Choice-making observations; Emotion matching; Engagement in routines; Thrive Online assessment	Use objects of reference, symbols, photos and intensive interaction; Repeat key emotions daily

Autumn 2 Blue Zone – Feeling Sad or Tired	Recognising when I feel sad, tired or unwell; How my body feels; Things that help me feel better	Identifying emotions from photos and mirrors; Requesting help; Using calming resources	PSHE: Wellbeing; Communication: Requesting support; Sensory Regulation	Staff observations; Symbol selection; Participation in calming activities; Thrive Online assessment	Use sensory stories, emotion props, personalised comfort items and visual schedules
Spring 1 Green Zone – Feeling Happy and Calm	Recognising happiness, calmness and feeling ready to learn; People and activities that make me happy	Sharing enjoyment; Positive interaction with others; Recognising preferred activities	PSHE: Positive relationships; Communication: Sharing experiences; Art and Music	Engagement records; Turn- taking observations; Emotional expression	Use motivating activities, sensory rewards and celebration boards
Spring 2 Yellow Zone – Feeling Worried, Nervous or Excited	Understanding that some feelings make our body busy; Identifying signs of worry, excitement or overload	Asking for breaks; Using sensory tools; Following calming routines	PSHE: Safety and wellbeing; OT/Sensory Programmes; Communication	Independent use of regulation tools; Participation in sensory circuits; Thrive Online assessment	Create individual regulation boxes; Use now-and-next boards and quiet spaces
Summer 1 Red Zone – Feeling Angry or Upset	Recognising when emotions become big; Identifying triggers; Understanding safe ways to calm down	Communicating discomfort; Using agreed calming strategies; Seeking adult support	PSHE: Behaviour and relationships; Communication: Functional requests	Behaviour observations; Reduced distress incidents; Strategy use	Use visual prompts, social stories, role play with puppets and predictable routines
Summer 2 My Feelings Toolkit	Revisiting all Zones; Identifying what helps me regulate; Understanding my personal preferences	Choosing appropriate regulation strategies; Communicating emotional needs; Increasing independence	Preparation for next class/year; PSHE: Personal development; Communication	Learner regulation profile; Staff observations; Celebration of progress; Thrive Online assessment	Use personalised emotion books, photos, videos and sensory games; Focus on independence and generalisation