



Fidget Toy and Chewelry Policy



This policy sets out Golden Hill Short Stay School's approach to the use of fidgets and chewelry as part of our

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provision for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities. It applies across the school, including lessons, interventions, transitions, breaktimes, lunchtimes, trips, off-site activities and other supervised settings.

Fidgets and chewelry are not statutory, however, where they are used to support sensory regulation, communication, self-regulation, access to learning or reasonable adjustments, they form part of the wider quality of education, behaviour and attitudes, personal development, safeguarding and SEND provision. This policy supports consistent, safe and purposeful use, grounded in an assessed, planned and reviewed graduated response.

All fidgets and chewelry used in school will be purchased by the school to ensure that they comply with relevant UK safety regulations and standards.

Fidgets and chewelry brought into school from home will not be permitted for use during the school day, as the school cannot guarantee that these items meet the required safety standards or are appropriate for use in the school environment.

Aims

- To promote access to learning, participation and independence for pupils with SEND.
- To support pupils to regulate safely, appropriately and increasingly independently.
- To provide a clear, consistent and safe framework for staff, pupils and families.
- To reduce dysregulation, support engagement and improve readiness to learn.
- To ensure practice is aligned with safeguarding, health and safety, equality and SEND duties.
- To maintain high expectations for all pupils while making reasonable adjustments where needed.
- To support pupils in developing self-awareness, self-advocacy and emotional regulation skills.
- To ensure use is reviewed regularly and faded when no longer required.

Statutory Requirements

Although fidgets and chewelry are not directly specified within the 2014 National Curriculum, their use must support the school's statutory duties and curriculum entitlement.

Relevant statutory duties and implications

Statutory framework	School responsibility	Implication for fidgets and chewelry
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Children and Families Act 2014	Identify and make provision for pupils with SEN	Use must be part of a planned support response within the graduated approach: assess, plan, do, review
SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (2015)	Person-centred support, collaboration with families, reasonable adjustments	Tool use should be individualised, documented where relevant and reviewed regularly
Equality Act 2010	Prevent discrimination and make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils	Sensory tools may be a reasonable adjustment if they help access learning and do not create disproportionate risk
Education Act 1996 and related duties	Secure suitable education and welfare	Support must not compromise access, participation or attendance
Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974	Protect health and safety	Items must be safe, durable and appropriate for the pupil
Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999	Carry out risk assessments and preventive measures	Individual and whole-school risk assessments are required where appropriate
Keeping Children Safe in Education	Maintain effective safeguarding practice	Staff must monitor misuse, concealment, sharing, ligature risk and other concerns
EYFS statutory requirements	Ensure welfare, health, safety and learning	Any use in early years must be age-appropriate, supervised and hygienic
Data protection legislation	Store personal data lawfully and securely	Records of need, support and review must be kept appropriately

Curriculum Coverage

The school's curriculum for fidgets and chewlery is not a discrete subject curriculum. It is a planned part of SEND support, personal development and access to learning. Broadly, the curriculum covers:

- understanding feelings, body cues and triggers
- recognising when support is needed

- learning the purpose of a fidget or chewlery item
- safe handling, hygiene and respectful use
- choosing appropriate tools for different contexts
- developing self-regulation and co-regulation skills
- building independence and self-advocacy
- understanding when not to use a tool
- transferring regulation strategies across lessons, breaks, home and community settings
- reducing reliance on adult prompting over time

Curriculum Implementation

Fidgets and chewlery are implemented through a planned, consistent and reviewed approach that supports access to learning without becoming a distraction.

Planning and identification

- Pupils are identified through observation, assessment, pupil voice, family input and, where relevant, advice from external professionals.
- Support is only introduced where there is a clear rationale linked to need.
- Provision is recorded in individual educational plans, sensory profiles, SEND support plans or EHCP-related documentation where appropriate.
- Staff consider whether the need can also be met through environmental adaptation, task adaptation, movement breaks, visual supports, communication strategies or changes to seating and pacing.

Teaching approaches

- Staff explicitly teach:
 - when to use the tool
 - how to use it safely and respectfully
 - when not to use it
 - how to request support appropriately
 - how to return the tool and move on to learning
- Adults model calm, consistent routines and use co-regulation before expecting independent use.
- Pupils are supported to understand that the purpose of the tool is to improve regulation and learning, not entertainment.
- Staff use adaptive teaching alongside sensory tools, including:
 - chunking tasks

- visual supports
- predictable routines
- reduced sensory load where possible
- movement opportunities
- carefully structured transitions

Resources and organisation

Resource type	Expected use
Hand fidgets	For short, purposeful use to support attention, calm or regulation
Chewlery	For pupils with identified oral sensory needs, subject to safety and hygiene rules
Storage and issue systems	To ensure items are allocated, monitored and returned appropriately
Visual prompts	To support expectations, timing and independence
Cleaning materials and procedures	To maintain hygiene and reduce infection risk

Expectations for use

- Use is purposeful, not universal.
- Items must not be shared unless the school has expressly agreed and hygiene arrangements are in place.
- Use may be time-limited, task-specific or context-specific.
- Staff will intervene if an item becomes distracting, unsafe, misused or socially disruptive.
- Pupils may need support to fade use as independence increases.

Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
Headteacher	Ensures the policy is implemented, resourced, monitored and reviewed

SENCO	Oversees identification, planning, review and staff guidance for pupils with SEND
Class teachers	Implement agreed strategies, teach expected routines and monitor impact in daily practice
Support staff	Reinforce consistent use and model regulation strategies.
Parents and carers	Share information, support consistency and contribute to review
Pupils	Learn and follow agreed expectations for safe and purposeful use

Safeguarding and safety

- Chewlery must be checked for suitability, durability and age appropriateness.
- Items must be risk assessed for choking, ligature, breakage and misuse.
- Hygiene procedures must be followed, including cleaning, replacement and personal allocation where necessary.
- Any item that becomes unsafe, damaged or inappropriate must be removed immediately.
- Concerns about concealment, tampering, self-injury or misuse must be escalated through safeguarding procedures.