



## Broomlands Primary School Policy on the Use of Fidgets

Over recent years we have seen a very large growth in the popularity and use of fidgets in school. At Broomlands Primary School, we absolutely recognise that some children may benefit from the use of fidgets as a support for attention, self-regulation and engagement in learning. For identified learners, an appropriate fidget may help reduce anxiety, provide sensory input and support concentration. At the same time, the school must ensure that classrooms remain calm, safe and purposeful places to learn. This policy sets out clear expectations so that fidgets are used as learning supports rather than toys, and so that their use does not distract others or create unnecessary safety concerns.

### Principles

- Fidgets are tools to support learning and regulation, not toys for play or entertainment.
- Fidgets will only be used where there is an identified need and where staff judge that they are helpful.
- The needs of the individual child must be balanced with the needs of the wider class.
- Teachers work hard to keep all children focused and on task; therefore, any fidget that disrupts teaching, learning or safety will not be permitted.

### Approval & Use

Fidgets may be considered for pupils whose attention, sensory or emotional regulation needs have been identified by school staff or through a medical diagnosis and discussed with parents/carers and relevant support staff where appropriate. The decision to allow a fidget in class rests with the school.

Where a fidget is agreed, the following expectations apply:

- The fidget must have a clear purpose linked to supporting learning or regulation;
- It should be small enough to fit discreetly in one hand or be kept at a desk;
- It must be quiet and not visually distracting;
- Only one fidget should be used at a time unless staff have agreed otherwise for a specific reason;
- Fidgets must not be shared or swapped with other children during learning time.

### Safety & Minimising Distraction

The school will not permit fidgets that create a health and safety risk or interfere with learning. Size and quantity are important: large items, multiple items, noisy items, items that light up, or items used in ways that draw attention away from learning are not suitable. Fluid-filled fidgets are also not appropriate, as damage or leakage may present safety, hygiene and distraction concerns.

Fidgets will not be used if they:

- create a risk of injury to the user or to others;
- cause noise or repeated movement that distracts others;
- become a toy, leading to off-task behaviour;
- cause disagreement, trading or competition between pupils;

- interfere with participation in practical activities, movement around the school or other aspects of safe classroom routines.

Teachers may ask for a fidget to be put away or removed at any point if it is no longer supporting the child appropriately or if it is affecting the learning, safety or wellbeing of others.

Examples of fidgets that may be suitable, where agreed by staff for an identified learner, include:

- Small squeeze balls made from durable material.
- Soft tangle-style fidgets with no sharp edges.
- Small textured sensory rings or finger fidgets.
- Twistable or bendable sensory fidgets that can be used quietly in one hand.
- Simple putty or dough-type sensory items only where staff agree that these can be used cleanly, safely and without distraction.

### Roles & Responsibilities

Staff will use professional judgement to decide whether a fidget is appropriate, monitor its impact and ensure expectations are applied consistently. Pupils using a fidget must use it responsibly, quietly and for the agreed purpose; otherwise, it may be removed.

Parents/carers should not send fidgets to school for classroom use without prior agreement and are asked to reinforce that fidgets are learning tools, not toys.

### Toys from Home

Toys from home are not appropriate in school unless staff have agreed that a specific item is needed for support. They can distract from learning and may be lost, damaged, swapped or cause disagreements, so families are asked not to send them into school unless agreed in advance.

### Monitoring and Review

Where a fidget is not effective, or leads to distraction or safety concerns, staff will consider alternative strategies to support the child's regulation and engagement.