



Sensory and Movement Tools Policy

Debden C of E Primary Academy

Reviewed by: Claudia Cope

Shared with staff:

September 2026

Shared with Governors:

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Review date:

September 2027

INTENT:

We recognise that for some children when used appropriately in the classroom, small sensory or movement tools (often referred to as 'fidget toys') can genuinely support concentration, focus and regulation - particularly children with ADHD, anxiety, or sensory differences. However, this is only when the tool supports learning rather than competing for attention. This policy aims to outline acceptable use of sensory or movement tools (often referred to as 'fidget toys').

HOW WE WILL USE SENSORY OR MOVEMENT TOOLS:

Class teachers, with the support of the SENCO and SLT, will identify any child who may benefit from the use of a sensory or movement tool. Class teachers will discuss the range of fidgets and agree one suitable for the individual's needs and preferences.

Fidgets will then be used to support in regulating emotions and supporting focus and concentration. Children will be encouraged to reflect on when these aids are most useful for them. When the class teacher agrees to the use of a fidget for a particular pupil, they will explain and ensure pupils understand the school guidelines for use. Where a child has an identified sensory or additional need, staff will continue to work with families to support appropriate strategies on an individual basis.

SCHOOL GUIDELINES FOR USE OF SENSORY OR MOVEMENT TOOLS:

- Fidgets are provided by the school or parents in discussion with the class teacher and/or the SENCO/SLT.
- Fidgets can only be used at times and in places agreed with the class teacher. Fidgets should be put away when not required, or at any times the teacher deems appropriate.
- Fidget toys are not to be traded with other children.
- Non gel fidgets should be used.
- Children using fidgets outside of this policy will need to hand the fidget to a member of staff. It will be handed to parents at the end of the day.

- Sensory and movement toys should stay pupils your hands (not being thrown, bounced, spun across the table, be swapped with others in a way that may look like playing etc.)
- Sensory and movement toys should facilitate a focus on learning (if the 'fidget toy' becomes the main focus rather than supporting learning, a break from the toy will need to be taken)
- Sensory and movement toys should almost fade into the background if they are being used successfully to listen and learn
- The use of fidgets in classrooms will remain at the discretion of the class teacher. Staff may ask children to put items away if they are becoming distracting, unsafe, or are no longer supporting learning.

SUITABLE SENSORY OR MOVEMENT TOOLS

We ask that any fidget brought into school is:

- Small and discreet (can fit into one hand easily)
- Silent
- Able to be used without needing constant visual attention
- Not distracting to others
- Not messy if it breaks or bursts

Examples of appropriate fidgets:

- Small stress ball that can fit in one hand
- Worry stone (Essex Sensory Toolkit recommends [these](#) worry stones)
- Small textured ring
- Essex Family and Child Wellbeing Service recommend the use of Blue tak, fidget cubes, bendy rulers or a doodle pad as things the young person can use in the classroom without distracting others.
- Essex Sensory Toolkit recommends [these](#) fidget toys
- Therapy Exercise Putty from a recommended supplier (Essex Sensory toolkit recommends this [Therapy Exercise Putty](#))

Examples of inappropriate items:

- Large stretchy toys
- Putty or slime that is not from the supplier recommended above
- Items such as mini skateboards or other novelty toys
- 3D printed fidgets that are noisy
- Items that require lots of movement or visual attention

It is important to remember that not every child needs a sensory or movement toy. Some children regulate more effectively through strategies such as classroom routines and structure, movement breaks, breathing regulation or resources such as wobble cushions or chair bands. Teachers provide regular movement opportunities and brain breaks for all children at appropriate points throughout the school day.

WORKING WITH OTHER AGENCIES

Where a child has an identified sensory or additional need, staff will continue to work with families, or outside agencies such as the Occupational Therapist to support appropriate strategies on an individual basis

COMPLAINTS

Complaints about SEND provision in our school should firstly be made to the class teacher and then to the SENDCo/Headteacher. They will then be referred to the school's complaints policy.

Contact details of support services for parents of pupils with SEN

Contact the Essex SEND Information Advice and Support (IAS) Service for free and impartial advice on SEND. They can help with everything to do with special educational needs and disabilities. email: send.iass@essex.gov.uk. call 0333 013 8913.

Contact details for raising concerns

Any complaints or concerns should be addressed in writing to the Debden Admin email address: admin@debden.essex.sch.uk. The correspondence should be sent for the attention of both the Headteacher (Mrs Sarah Bailey) and the school SENDCO (Ms Claudia Cope).

Should your concern not be dealt with satisfactorily by our school leadership team, please forward your concern to Mr Tom Caster – our Chair of Governors. His email address is tcaster@debden.essex.sch.uk

THE LOCAL AUTHORITY OFFER

Our local authority's local offer is published here: <http://www.essexlocaloffer.org.uk/>

LINKS WITH OTHER POLICIES

This policy links to the following policies:

- SEND policy
 - Accessibility Plan
 - Behaviour Policy
 - Equality Information and Objectives
 - Medical Policy