

9th July 2026

Dear Parent/Carer,



Head Teacher:

Janis Williams

BA (Hons) Primary General
NPQH

Windmill Way, Ingleby Barwick
Stockton on Tees, TS17 0LW

Tel: 01642 761985

Fax: 01642 750192

Email:

office@inglebymill.org.uk

Website:

www.inglebymill.org.uk



RE: Children bringing fidgets and 'chewlry' into school

From September, across our Trust, we will be making a small but important change in relation to how we manage concentration aids (or fidgets) and 'chewlry' in school. As you will appreciate, this equipment is an important additional support and reasonable adjustment for those children who require it. For others, it can be a distraction and unhelpful 'toy' that can hinder learning. As such, it is important that we get the balance right, in the best interests of all the children in our classes.

Concentration Aids

Commonly called 'squishy toys', 'fidget toys', or 'fidget spinners'.

Therefore, from September:

- If parents feel that a concentration aid is needed for their child, they should ask to speak to the SENDCo. Children will then be monitored by the SENDCo and class teacher to decide whether the need presented at home is also present in school. The SENDCo will share the findings with parents as soon as possible – and if needed, may arrange a meeting to discuss whether the child requires a SEND Support Plan and is included within the school's SEND Register.
- Only concentration aids provided by the school will be able to be used. A range of options will be available to meet the individual needs of children. To benefit all children, these will be the least obtrusive option needed (i.e. the quietest and most discrete). This will mean that children will always have access to the equipment they need, they cannot leave it at home and parents will not have to fund the items.
- Their use will be reviewed termly, in partnership with parents, to ensure that children who no longer require them are carefully transitioned from their use.

Chewlry

When not used appropriately, or unmonitored, chewlry can pose a choking danger to children and be unhygienic. Generally, children who require 'chewlry' have been advised to use it by a medical or education professional. Therefore, from September:

- If parents feel that 'chewlry' is needed for their child, they should ask to speak to the SENDCo.
- For the vast majority of cases, this significant adaptation will only be made if a professional report, or education, health and care plan detail required use.
- These items will be generally provided from home, so that they can be washed and safety checked daily by parents. Other criteria for use are:
 - They are purchased from a reputable source
 - They are age and stage appropriate
 - They have no internal parts
 - They have a working breakable clasp (for those that go around a child's neck)
 - It is in good condition with no parts which may cause a choking hazard
- If an item becomes unsafe or is seen as unsuitable in school, it will be kept safe and returned to parents that evening. If a child is in desperate need of a replacement, school may contact home or provide one if available.
- A parental agreement will be required to be completed

We hope that you understand these important changes.

If you have any questions or concerns, please speak to the school SENDCo in the first instance.

Many thanks.
Janis Williams
Head Teacher