



Coastal Together Federation of Schools

Instil | Understand | Learn | Become

13th June 2024

Dear Coastal Together Parents,

Your thoughts please...

As a leadership team we discussed this article from the BBC News South East about a school that had asked its parents to put away their mobile phones when dropping off and picking up their children. We would genuinely like to hear your thoughts about this.

[5 question Quiz](#) - please fill me in !

Parents asked to put away phones at school gate



Image caption,

Head teacher Andy Best said he was not questioning the "love and support" of parents

Jacob Panons

BBC News, South East

Published
10 June 2024

A head teacher is asking parents to put their phones away when collecting their children from his East Sussex school.

Andy Best, who runs Pashley Down Infant School, in Eastbourne, sent out the plea in a newsletter in the hope of encouraging conversation.

He said pupils often leave the classroom "excited or relieved to see whoever is picking them up only to find their adult scrolling [on] their phone, typing a message or on a phone call. It's sad to see".

The head teacher said his no-phones request was an attempt by the school to "resurrect the joy of conversation back into the community".

In survey of secondary school students in 2017 showed [the overuse of mobile phones by parents disrupted family life](#).

More than a third of 2,000 11-18-year-olds who responded to the poll said they had asked their parents to stop checking their devices.

And 14% said their parents were online at meal times, although 95% of 3,000 parents, polled separately, denied it.

Parents' reaction

Mr Best said his newsletter had been positively received by parents.

One parent outside the school told **BBC Radio Sussex**: "I think it's nice for the kids to come out of school and see mummies and daddies and grandparents looking out for them as they are walking out the door with big smiles on their faces rather than [being] buried in their phones."

Another said: "I think it's good to be present for your child, I think at the beginning of the day and at the end of the day it's a nice time to have that little bit of quality time with them."

Another mother explained that they agreed with not being on their phones while children were leaving the classroom, but when the gates were closed it was a good time for people to get on top of their "busy lives".

Vocabulary

Mr Best said he had noticed more parents consciously put their phones away when they arrived at the school.

He added he was not questioning the "love and support" of parents and knew the problem existed at other schools.

Mr Best said the standard of children's vocabulary when they start school had diminished in recent years.

He said: "A lot of schools are having to work on what we would call 'oracy' to develop and improve children's vocabulary and talk."

He said the growing concern around children's language development could be linked to a lack of talking at home.