

Gillespie Primary School

Smartphone Survey 2024

Summary of responses



Objectives and methodology

Objectives

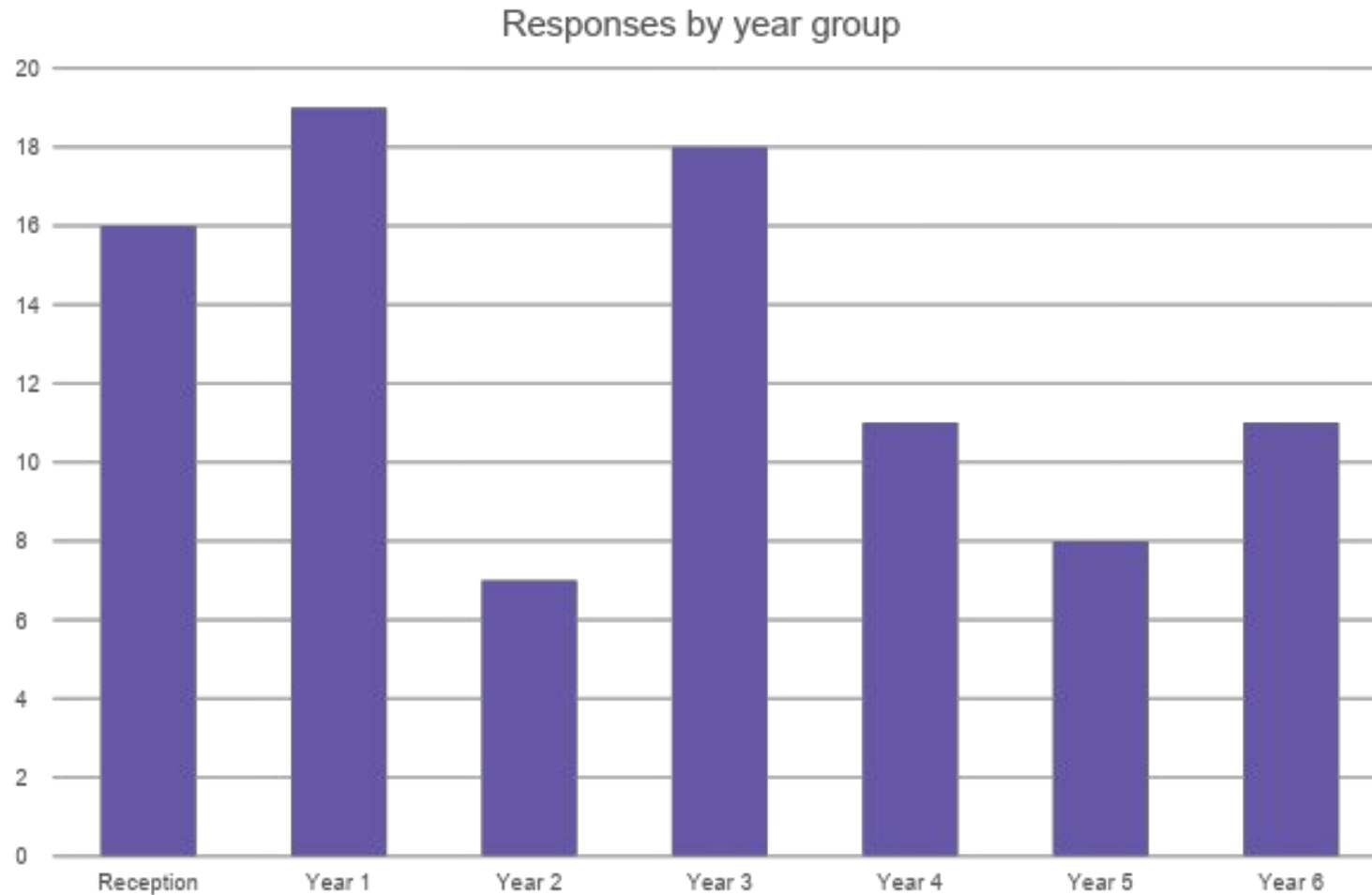
- To understand the attitude of parents and carers towards children and smartphones
- To identify areas where the parent community - in partnership with the school - can provide support or information on this issue

Methodology

- Anonymous survey consisting of 13 questions including a mix of multiple choice and free text boxes
- Survey issued via Google docs in June 2024 and open for responses for approximately 4 weeks
- Survey closed in July 2024 and results analysed over the summer

Engagement overview

We received 90 responses from parents/carers at Gillespie

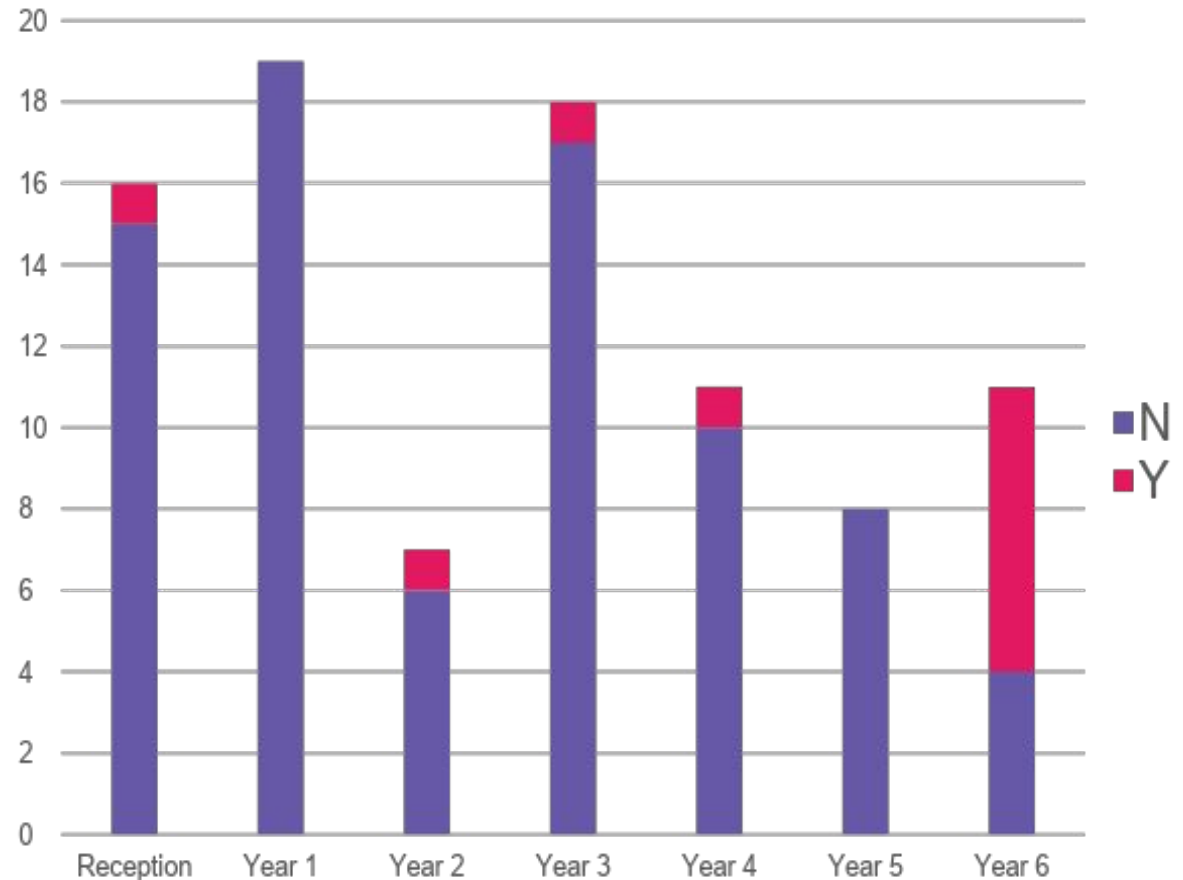


Does your child have a mobile phone?

The majority of Gillespie students do not have a phone, but students are more likely to have a phone in Year 6

Results show:

- 85 per cent did not have a smartphone
- 1 per cent had a phone with no internet access (dumbphone)
- 7 per cent had a phone with limited internet access
- 4 per cent had a smartphone with internet access
- Others reported using an ipad, or allowing their child an old phone to listen to podcasts



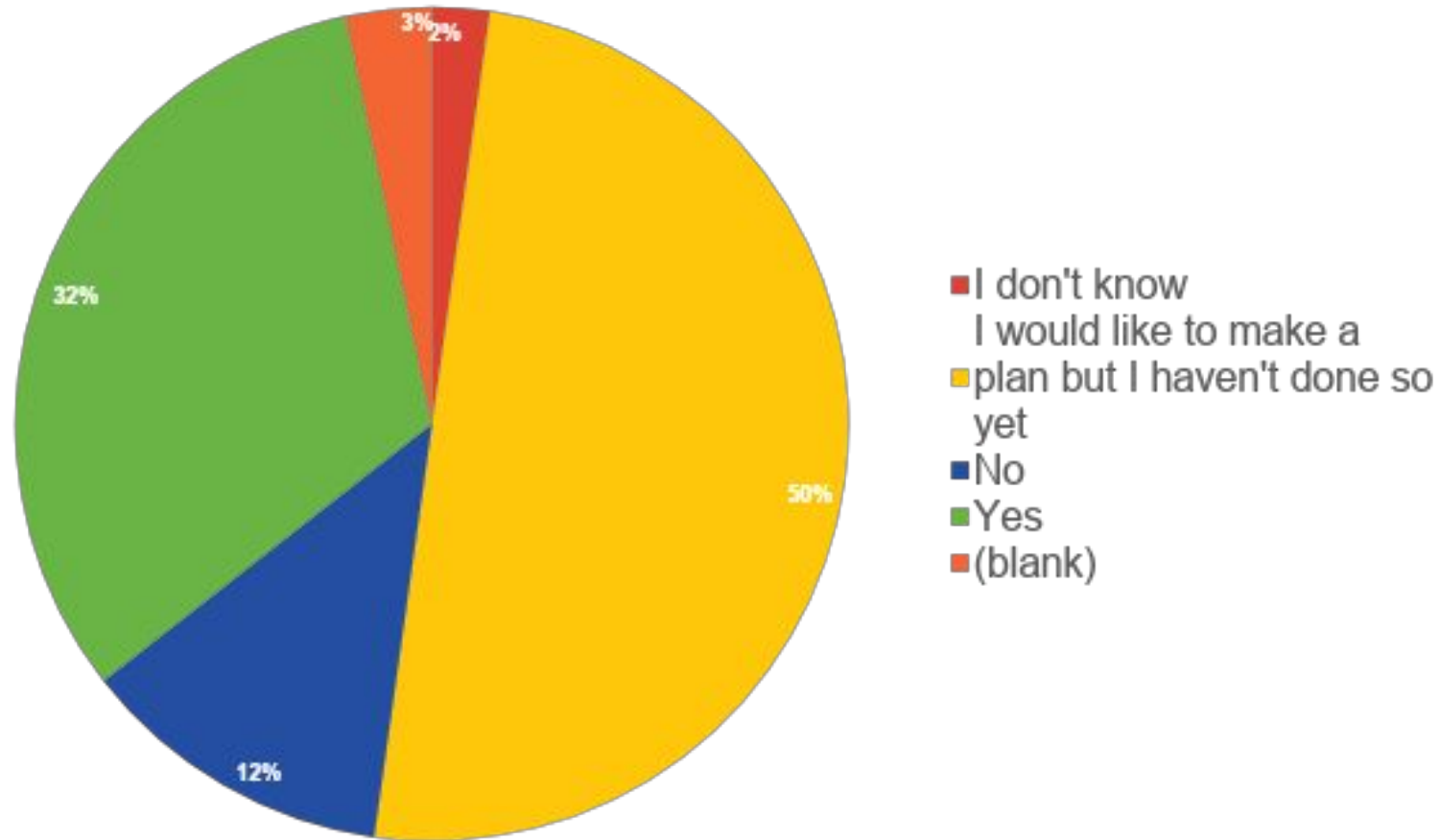
If your child doesn't have a mobile phone, when do you expect to get them one?

Nearly half of respondents said they expected to get their child a mobile phone in Year 7

Response	No.
Year 7 (age 11-12)	42
I don't know	10
Year 6 (age 10-11)	8
Year 10 (age 14-15)	4
Year 11 (age 15-16)	4
Year 8 (age 12-13)	4
Year 12 (age 16-17)	2
Year 4 (age 8-9)	2
Year 5 (age 9-10)	2
Year 1 (age 5-6)	1
Year 3 (age 7-8)	1
Year 9 (age 13-14)	1
Blank	9

Do you have a plan for when your child will own or use a smartphone?

51 per cent of respondents said they would like to make a plan but haven't done so yet, while 32 per cent said they already have a plan in place



What is the main factor in deciding when to get your child a smartphone?

Going to secondary school and travelling to school alone are major factors in deciding when to get a smartphone

Response	No.
Going to secondary school	32
Travelling to school alone	29
Social pressure	11
I don't know yet	7
Other	6
Family comms	3
For schoolwork or online learning	2
<u>Independence</u>	<u>2</u>

Please note: The following responses in the above table have been categorised into broader groups for simplicity:

Social pressure = when friends or others in the class do so + other free text comments

Family comms = Other siblings/family members having one + other free text comments

Independence = Free text comments eg "Ability to arrange their own lives without an adult go between"

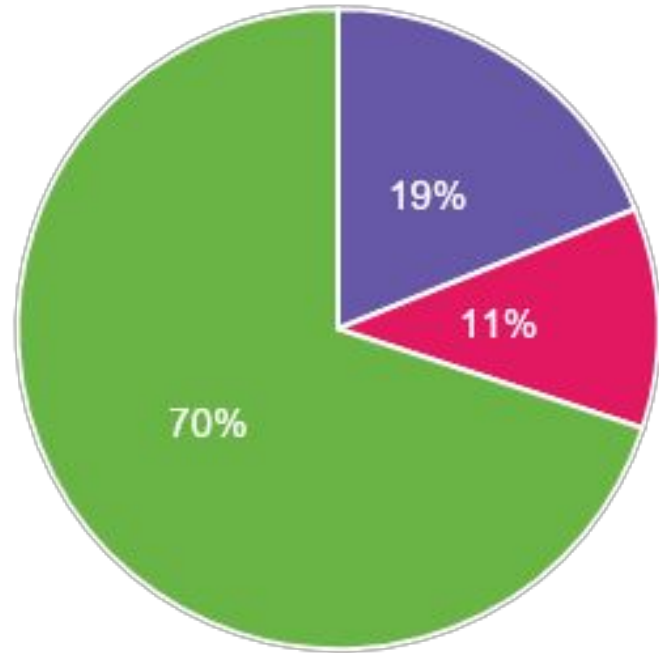
How Gillespie students use mobile phones, when they have them

- Children that did use phones, used them for communication with home when travelling to school, making calls, text messages, taking photos, browsing online, gaming and social media
- 83 per cent did not use any social media, although the most popular was Whatsapp
- Most did not use gaming apps, but the most popular were Minecraft and Roblox



Would you be interested in more information on smartphone use?

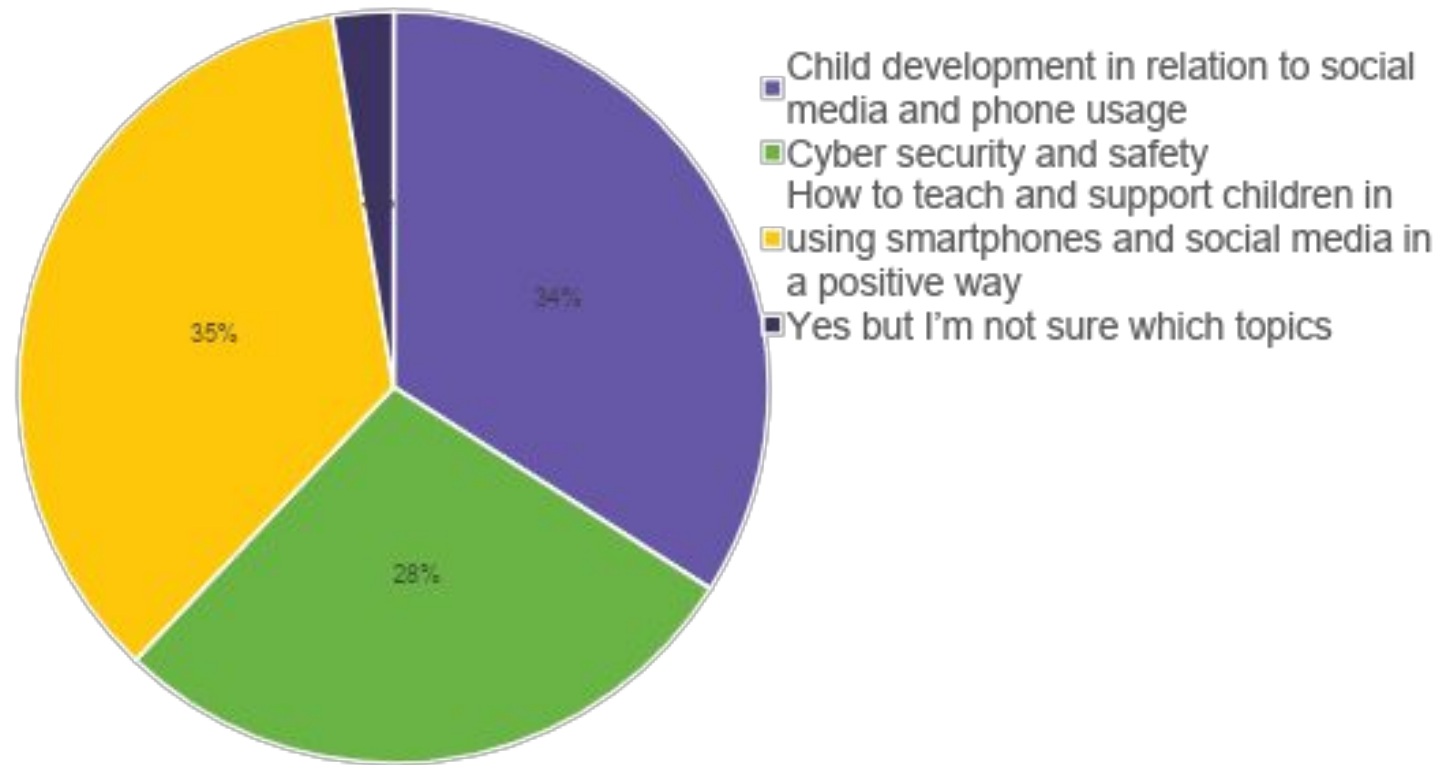
70 per cent of respondents would be interested in more information on this topic, with 19 per cent not sure and 11 per cent not interested



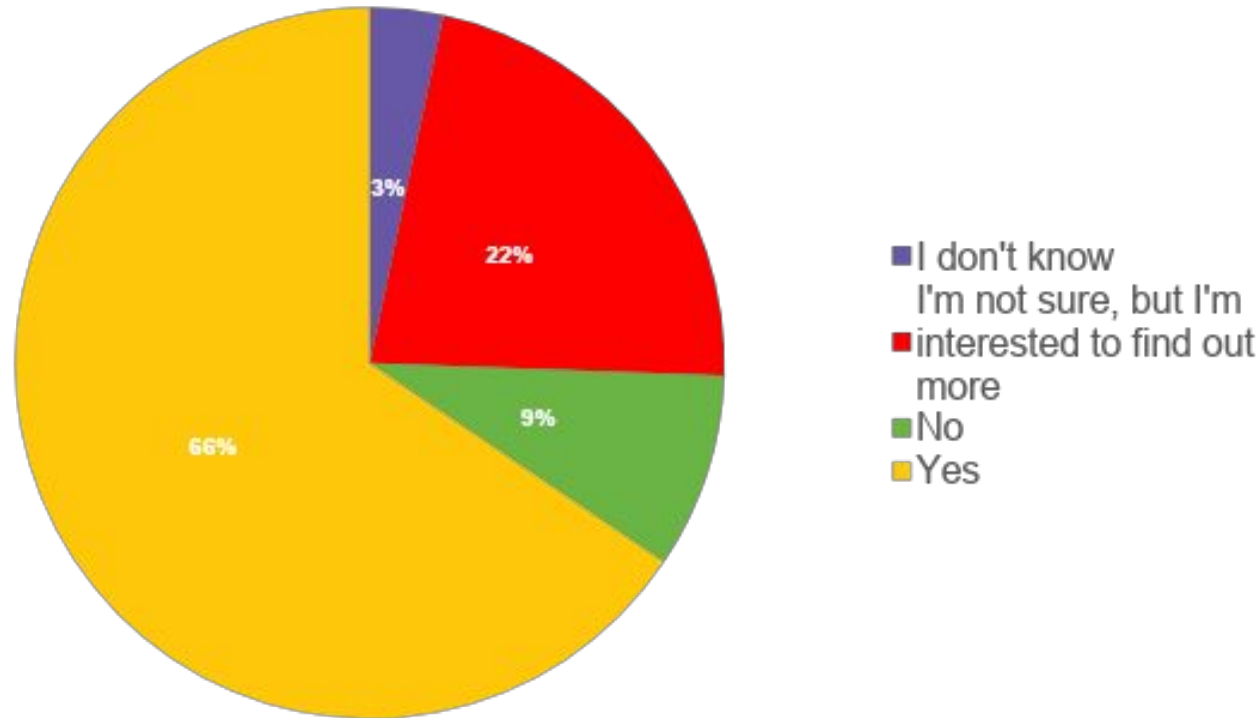
■ I'm not sure ■ No ■ Yes

What type of information are you interested in?

People are interested in child development and phone use, cyber security and safety, as well as how to use social media in a positive way



Would you be supportive of a voluntary pact for parents to delay giving children smartphones until they reach age 14?



- 66 per cent of people said they would support a voluntary pact to delay smartphone use until children reach age 14
- A further 22 per cent said they are not sure but interested to find out more
- 9 per cent said no

What Gillespie parents and carers had to say

"I think all schools should be smartphone free"

"I find that my child having a smartphone is a positive experience.

"They are able to independently speak to and message with friends and family, building supportive relationships."

"I'm interested to find out more about phones that give them some of the joy...but banning social media and allowing (transparent) parent access

"I believe that if we as a community act together can limit the exceed use of mobile phone/ technology."

I got my older children phones in Year 6.. This is to give them a year of coaching before secondary school. We read everything and talk about it for a year. Phones are never in bedrooms and only used downstairs."

What Gillespie parents and carers had to say

"I value & appreciate this being looked at"

"I most fear the peer pressure of classmates having one"

"Great initiative and welcome this given the potential risks."

"Needs to be balanced as they will need a phone at some stage"

For my child, now age 13, "not having direct access to a phone felt artificial and was a barrier to developing some independence. "

"She now has a smart phone with very limited usage that she does not take to school. The experience is not without hiccups but overall positive"

What Gillespie parents and carers had to say

My child will have to travel for secondary school....

“It is essential for them to have a mobile phone for this journey, so that they are able to inform us in case of delays, and also find alternative routes in case of travel disruption or if they miss their stop.”

“We can also track where they are if needed. This allows them to travel independently, but also gives us parents a lot of reassurance.”

“We use parental controls to ensure they do not spend excessive time on social media or games”

“While I am very supportive of care and attention to children and how they access mobiles, I believe there are positive elements to connectivity that sometimes get lost amid the (valid) concerns about negative effects.

“Educating everyone on how to have a safe and non consuming relationship with tech is vital as are behavioural elements like cyber bullying.

“But please don't overlook the creative aspects of what many children are doing such as video editing and music creation, and the freedom connection gives them in a world that they have less in person freedom to move around in.

“We don't give access to social media for these reasons but curated groups for messages can be a training ground, similar to Google classroom”

What Gillespie parents and carers had to say

"I think it's better for kids to be taught how to use a phone responsibly than denied a phone until an arbitrary age"

"It is very difficult to not allow iPhone and iPad usage as it is everywhere"

"I would absolutely welcome a parent pact to delay smartphones..."

"It seems bizarre that most parents, when asked, disapprove of phones for children, yet nearly everyone gets it because everyone else does..."

"I would also welcome the school to think more carefully about the amount of homework they set online - makes it difficult to argue with the child that they should have less screen time, and very difficult to monitor what else they do online when doing their homework, and like a first step towards their own phone"

"I am concerned with what my children might be exposed to when they do have a smartphone"

What Gillespie parents and carers had to say

"I think smartphones and social media for children is a disaster. Adults are addicted and modelling terrible behaviour."

"I only hope in the years before we get there that there's some more guidance and parents band together to take it more seriously"

"We need a solution to keep our kids safe when they're not with us, but keep them away from social media"

"I feel very strongly that smart phone technology is designed to be powerfully addictive."

"As such it can have a detrimental effect on how children interact with the world and how they use their time, with multiple knock on effects (mostly negative). The consequent impact on parent child dynamics is particularly problematic."

"I would not allow a smartphone use to be part of my child's primary age experience"

I think more needs to be done to halt the rise of smartphones.

"I don't plan to allow my child to have a smartphone until he's 15 or so."

I will let him have a simple phone when he starts to take the train to school on his own

Key takeaways

What the survey tells us about Gillespie parents and carers

- Most people (85 per cent) do not have smartphones for their children, and nearly half (49 per cent) expected to get these in Year 7 with travelling alone and going to secondary school the driving factors
- Getting a smartphone is a considered decision for parents and carers with 51 per cent saying they would like to have a plan in place, while 33 per cent said they had already developed one
- The majority of people (70 per cent) are interested in further information about this issue, with another 19 per cent unsure about whether they would like more information
- How to teach and support children in using smartphones in a positive way was the most popular topic to learn more about (77 per cent) followed by child development in relation to social media and phone usage (71 per cent) and cyber security and safety (58 per cent)
- There is widespread support (66 per cent) among respondents for a voluntary pact that would delay smartphone use until age 14, with another 22 per cent interested to find out more