

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

University of Buckingham School of Education

The Editor,
Buckingham Journal of Education

06/07/21

Dear Sir,

Banning of mobile phones in schools

I am writing to express my dismay at the Secretary of State's proposed ban on pupils having mobile phones in school as reported in *The Times* on 29th June 2021.

I would like to draw your attention to research currently being undertaken as part of the Masters programme at the University of Buckingham. Working with a small sample of trial secondary aged classes we are using mobile phones to enhance and improve the teaching of modern foreign languages. In this project the base language of the phone is reset to Spanish enabling the phone to become a learning tool in its own right not just a research tool.

Initial results are very encouraging. Parents are reporting a significant increase in pupils' enthusiasm for an engagement in language learning. Pupils are reporting increased confidence in the target language and formal testing is showing significant improvements in both vocabulary and grammar.

My project represents a step toward developing a pedagogy which using the considerable power of mobile technology to improve outcomes for pupils. It is our view that a ban will prevent the development of good practice which will capitalise on the power of the technology of the mobile phone.

I note that headteachers regard such a ban as un-necessary (*INews* 29th June 2021) as schools are already managing mobile phones through policy and good practice. I argue that should a ban on mobile phones be instigated the further development of future good pedagogy will be severely hampered.

Yours sincerely

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(Elizabeth Clark is the corresponding author)