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The school that took on mobile phone companies

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Two giant mobile phone companies are to move a mast at a primary school, after parents claimed their children fell sick.

The mast was already in use when St Edward's RC primary school opened in Coleshill, Warwickshire 11 years ago. It is owned by O₂, which rents space on it to Orange. An O₂ spokesman said "there were concerns from some of the local people that there are health issues" but added that the mast posed no risks to health.

But parents said children and staff suffered from insomnia, headaches and numbness. They conducted a survey of 22 staff who had been at the school for the 11 years, and 59 children who had been pupils for seven years.

Their results showed 56 per cent of the children and 86 per cent of the staff had problems sleeping, 54 per cent and 59 per cent respectively were getting headaches and migraines, and 46 per cent and 95 per cent respectively reported fatigue and numbness. About 45 per cent of teachers and pupils had red eyes; other symptoms included dizziness, nosebleeds, nausea and hearing strange hums and clicks.

The parents have been backed by Warwickshire County Council and their MP, Mike O'Brien, the Solicitor General. Parents and their representatives held talks with O₂.