

Robin's Nest Parent App: Usability Testing Report

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1. Test Goals

The goal of this usability test was to evaluate how easily parents can use the Robin's Nest Parent App to complete the main tasks the app was designed to support. Since parents often need to complete tasks quickly, the focus was on clarity, efficiency, and ease of navigation.

The testing focused on whether users could:

- create an account and log in successfully
- report attendance information
- submit pickup updates
- view school updates and access important resources
- move through the app without confusion or extra steps

2. Methods

Usability testing was conducted using a task-based approach. Participants were asked to complete realistic parent tasks within the app while their interactions were observed. The goal was to evaluate how intuitive the app felt and whether users could complete key actions without needing instructions.

Usability testing was completed in two phases. Phase 1 testing was used to identify early usability issues and technical problems in the app. This was done by me alone. After that round of testing, I made changes to improve the user flow, fix errors, and reduce repeated typing for parents. Phase 2 testing was then used to confirm that the updated version worked more smoothly and that the main tasks could be completed successfully.

Testing was conducted with a total of four participants, including myself and three parents from Robin's Nest Nature School, who represent the target users of the application.

The following testing scenarios were used:

Scenario 1: Create account and log in

- Open the app on the login screen
- Select the option to create a new parent account
- Enter the required parent and child information
- Submit the form and confirm the account is created successfully
- Return to the login screen if needed
- Log in using the newly created account
- Confirm the user is taken to the Home dashboard
- Verify that the user information is stored correctly in Firestore

Scenario 2: Report a sick day

- Log in with a valid parent account.
- Open the Attendance screen from the Home dashboard.
- Select the child from the dropdown menu.
- Choose an attendance reason.
- Add details if needed.
- Submit the form and confirm the success message appears.
- Confirm the app returns to Home.
- The record was verified in Firestore by me (not the participant).

Scenario 3: Submit pickup authorization

- Log in with a valid parent account.
- Open the Pickup screen from the Home dashboard.
- Select the child or children from the list.
- Choose the pickup person from the dropdown menu.
- If Other is selected, enter the required additional pickup details.
- Submit the pickup plan and confirm the success message appears.
- Confirm the app returns to Home.
- The record was verified in Firestore by me (not the participant)

Scenario 4: View updates and resources

- Log in with a valid parent account
- Open the Updates screen and review posted reminders
- Return to Home
- Open Program Info
- Open the Parent Handbook link
- Open the Weather link
- Return to the app and confirm navigation still works

Participants were encouraged to complete the tasks naturally so that any points of hesitation or confusion could be observed.

3. Participant Profiles

The participants included me and three parents from Robin’s Nest Nature School, which is the intended user group for this application.

All participants:

- regularly use smartphones
- are familiar with basic mobile apps
- represent real users who would need to complete tasks quickly during busy routines such as drop-off and pickup

This made the testing more realistic because feedback was based on actual parent experiences and expectations.

4. Findings

The Phase 1 testing helped identify areas that needed improvement, including issues with the weather screen, repeated data entry, and some unclear parts of the attendance and pickup flows. These findings led to several changes before Phase 2 testing, including having child information appear automatically from the parent account and improving the stability of the weather screen.

Overall, the results showed that the Robin's Nest Parent App was easy to navigate and supported the main parent tasks effectively. All participants were able to complete the scenarios successfully without major difficulty.

In Scenario 1, users were able to move from account creation to login and reach the Home dashboard without confusion. This showed that the first-time user experience and authentication flow were clear and functional.

In Scenario 2, participants were able to submit attendance information successfully. The Attendance screen was straightforward, although a few participants paused briefly when selecting reasons or deciding what to enter in the details field.

In Scenario 3, users completed pickup updates without issues. The relationship dropdown worked well, and participants understood how to complete the form, including when selecting "Other."

In Scenario 4, participants were able to view updates and access resources such as the Parent Handbook and weather links. External links opened correctly, and users were able to return to the app without issues.

Across all scenarios, the Home dashboard was effective in helping users quickly locate the features they needed. Participants described the app as simple, organized, and easy to use.

5. Issues Identified

During Phase 1 testing, several issues were identified and addressed before Phase 2 testing. By the final round of testing, no major usability problems remained, although a few smaller improvement areas were still noted.

- Some users may pause briefly when deciding what attendance reason to choose
- External links worked correctly, but users may not immediately know that some buttons open outside the app
- Minor interface issues were identified during development, including a weather screen icon problem that had previously caused freezing, although this was fixed before final testing

These issues did not prevent successful task completion, but they did point to areas where the app could be improved further.

6. Recommendations

Based on the testing results, the following improvements are recommended:

- Continue refining labels and wording in the attendance flow to make choices even clearer
- Add a small note or visual indicator for buttons that open external links
- Continue polishing the interface for consistency across screens
- Conduct additional testing with more users in the future to gather broader feedback

7. Conclusion

The usability testing showed that the Robin's Nest Parent App is effective in helping parents complete important school-related tasks in a clear and organized way. Users were able to create accounts, log in, report attendance, submit pickup changes, and access updates and resources successfully.

Overall, the app met its usability goals by making common parent tasks simple, fast, and easy to understand. The issues identified were minor and mainly related to small refinements rather than major design problems. This suggests that the app is already functioning as a practical and usable tool for parent-school communication.