

Security: You just can't ignore it

By Owen Wagabaza
and Conan Businge

A safe learning environment is crucial for every child. When violence is part of the educational setting, it affects the students' learning.

Even though your child may not be the victim of violence in school, there is chance that he or she will witness violent acts during the educational years.

Simon Mulongo, a security expert with Emans Frontiers Limited, says: "Children in international schools may be more prone to violence than those in other schools, the reason why every school must take security seriously."

"Most of the children in these schools are from well-to-do families including those of diplomats, expatriates and top government officials and are at times key targets to be a reason why the schools have to be security-conscious," Mulongo says.

"International schools need serious security firms, highly trained guards, high and strong perimeter fences, closed-circuit cameras (CCTV) and a good operational relationship with security agencies near them," Mulongo advises.

Yasin Yakut, the principal of Galaxy International School, says all educational institutions need elaborate security plans.

"We all need security experts to periodically review our schools, to ensure they are safe before we admit students," he says.

Mulongo says a security plan should be about assessing both the human

and non-human security threats.

"Schools need to hire security agencies or get security personnel; such as the army, intelligence or Police to help them draw up security plans," he advises.

Human threats may include terrorism, kidnapping and vandalism. non-human attacks may include floods and fire.

Mulongo says the security of the school should go beyond its premises. One needs to plan against hijacking, accidents and other threats.

"Children and staff should also be taught how to fight back in case they are threatened," he adds.

In this era of global terrorism, safety in crowded places is paramount, especially when it comes to international schools with a broader link to the international community.

Children and staff should be taught how to fight back, when threatened

According to *True Teaching*, a website on education-related issues, accreditation to local and international bodies such as the Council of International Schools (CIS) gives assurance to parents and other stakeholders that a school's security is guaranteed.



Everyone is responsible for child safeguarding in a school

Before accreditation, CIS demands that schools meet internationally recognised standards of school safety and are rigorous in their evaluation of schools' preparedness for disasters, whether natural or man-made, the website notes.

Among the measures schools must have are security cameras, limited entry and exit zones and 24-hour foot and vehicle security monitoring.

"In addition to security personnel, they should also have a closed-circuit television system that records all persons entering and exiting. Students, school personnel and visitors should be screened at entry, typically through digitalised security controls that may include fingerprinting," says Peter

Akandonda, an expert with a private security firm in Kampala.

Visitors should also be given a badge which they must display to make them recognisable.

Most international schools have transport services to and from the school, but those who arrive by private means must enter and exit at a designated area and all vehicles should be registered and monitored.

International schools ought to make sure that children are also protected from social, physical, moral and psychological abuse, which may be orchestrated by fellow students, teachers or support staff.

This may include bullying or racism. It is here that a child protection policy comes in handy.

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

A safeguarding or child protection policy is a statement that clearly states what an organisation or group will do to keep children safe. It is a statement that sets out the organisation's commitment to protecting children.

According to Isaac Baliruno, a consultant with Edu-Consults, a child safeguarding policy should be part of the school culture so that everyone, including parents, is aware and knows the institution's standards, expectations and procedures.

Baliruno says everyone is responsible for child safeguarding in a school.

"Senior leaders have the responsibility to ensure that procedures are established and practised daily, that all staff within the school is suitably trained and the culture of the school is a proactive child safeguarding one," he says.

To make the policy effective, procedures such as code of conduct and robust reporting measures should be in place.

"This does not mean having a set of documents on a shelf. It is about having procedures that are implemented and practised every day by every single member," Baliruno emphasises.

"All members of staff should receive adequate training so that they know signs of child abuse to look for and what to do if they are suspicious.

ISU CELEBRATING

INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE
ESTABLISHED IN 1967
BALANCED PRINCIPLED
EDUCATION
WORLD LEADERS
CARING OPTIMISTIC
DIPLOMA PROGRAMME
INTERDISCIPLINARY
CREATIVE ACTION
SERVICE
COMMUNITY
ACCREDITED
APPLICATION
CRITICAL THINKERS ISU
MIDDLE YEARS PROGRAMME
CONFIDENCE
ACCREDITED

SCHOOL OF UGANDA

OPTIMAL DEVELOPMENT
RESPONSIBILITY
GRADUATION
KNOWLEDGE
REFLECTIVE
DECISIVE
SCIENCE
REFLECTIVE
DIRECTION
LEADING
NURTURE
LEARNING
AUTHORITY
HOPEFUL
WORLD INSIGHT
PERSPECTIVE
EARLY CHILDHOOD
CREATIVE

OPPORTUNITY
HOLISTIC
RIGOROUS
NURTURE
INSPIRE
CULTURE
MEMORIES
FUTURE
COUNSELING
TOLERANCE
PERSPECTIVE
DISCOVERY
SMARTNESS
EDUCATION
INQUIRIOUS

YEARS OF EXCELLENCE

Visit www.isu.ac.ug or call 0757754808 or 0772754810

Are you ready to...

Open the door to your future?
Discover your talents?
Experience a world class education?

Unlock your potential @ ISU!

The International School of Uganda (ISU) is a non-profit, co-educational day school, established in 1967 offering an international education for students 2.5 to 19 years old.

The International Baccalaureate (IB) programmes create 21st century citizens through creativity, experience and challenge:

- Primary Years Programme (2.5 – 11 years)
- Middle Years Programme (11 – 16 years)
- Diploma Programme (16 – 19 years)

Limited spaces are available for the 2017 – 2018 intake.
School starts 17th August 2017. We are ready to welcome you!



INTERNATIONAL
SCHOOL OF UGANDA



Financial assistance is available for self-funding families