

Over 500 pupils stranded as Kakumiro officials close 6 schools

Wanting. The schools had no pit-latrines, classroom blocks were dilapidated, among others

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KAKUMIRO. More than 500 pupils are stranded following the closure of six private schools in Nkooko Sub-county, Kakumiro District after they were found running below minimum operational standards.

The schools were closed on Tuesday during an operation conducted by the district education department in conjunction with the police.

The schools closed include God is Able Nursery and Primary School, Blue Angels School, St Owen, Trinity Academy, St Balikudembe School and Kahyoro Primary School.

The Kakumiro District Education Officer, Mr William Baleke, on Tuesday said most

of the schools were found operating without minimum operational requirements such as classroom structures and toilet facilities.

At St Balikudembe School, pupils were found attending lessons in dilapidated structures while other lessons were being conducted under trees.

The head teacher, Mr Joseph Balikudembe Ssengozi, was allegedly found drunk.

There is also a shortage of pit-latrines at St Balikudembe School.

Addressing pupils of St Balikudembe School, Mr Baleke said: "After finding that there are no latrines for pupils and teachers here, we have decided to close the school to protect your lives. We have also found pupils studying under trees with no seats. We cannot allow you to continue studying under these conditions and we also advise you to go and tell your parents to take you to other

THE LAW

Education Act, 2008 of Uganda under section (32) prohibits operation of a school by anybody without due registration and licensing by relevant authorities.

The Education Act 2008 stipulates some of the basic requirements for a school to be registered and licensed and include enough land, good sanitary facilities such as toilets, trained teachers and instructional materials.

schools."

Mr Baleke said failure to adhere to the directive of the district authorities would

lead to prosecution of the proprietors and teachers of the affected schools.

"I want you to go back home and tell your parents that we have closed your school and if we get any information that you are back here without meeting the requirements, we will be forced to arrest your head teacher, teachers and the director," Mr Baleke said.

Some of the affected parents have, however, protested against the closure of the schools, saying the closed schools were doing a great service in educating their children.

They accused the district education department of practicing double standards, claiming that several government schools were also operating below minimal standards but they have not been closed.

The directors of the closed schools pleaded for leniency in vain.