

quote of the day

EDITORIAL

Govt ban of nursery homework timely

Government on Wednesday directed that pre-primary schools should stop handing homework and tests to nursery school-going children and also ordered schools not to use entry interviews to select those joining Primary One.

This unequivocal directive was issued during the Education Sector Review that stated more less the obvious that pre-primary, which is a play stage, should be considered a level that helps children activate their senses before they join primary section.

The first five years of a child's life, which are the formative years, are absolutely critical for the development, performance and success of the child throughout their life. True, the child's cognitive development can be developed early and we must seize the opportunity to tap in the vast human potential that exists in these children.

However, this early learning stage is also characterised by fancy, to allow a child play on their imagination to build their perceptions of what the world is like. So piling homework to a child in nursery school, some of which has been established to be way above their age, is to simply destroy the fancy in the children.

In nursery, the major component of learning emphasises how to socialise, how to interact with other children and the world, and being introduced to new things. This does not require a child to carry a bagful of work to be done back home, which many times parents end up doing on behalf of their children.

What does one expect a three/four-year-old to do as homework? While it is true the child's cognitive development can be developed early, it does not have to be with overloading toddlers with assignments too heavy for their age.

Government should also extend the ban to giving holiday work to nursery children. Holiday is meant precisely as a leisure time devoted to rest or pleasure and being away from work. We only need to stimulate the proper environment to achieve what we

yearn to achieve with doing homework.

The same logic applies to a child enrolling for Primary One. Interviews before a child joins Primary One would make the world look artificial to the child. Besides, what would the schools be interviewing since testing is premised on the assumption that you test from what you taught.

We all know that these interviews are another way for schools to make an extra penny but let them be reflective of the expected and desired outcomes from the learners.

The Issue:

Nursery children

Our view:

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editorial@ug.nationmedia.com