

EDITOR'S PICK

How schools use biometric machines to fight absenteeism

Institutions are turning to technology to restore order and accountability. In a growing trend, schools have embraced a biometric attendance management system to monitor students' movements and strengthen engagement with parents.

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Senior colleagues tip Form One students on High school life

Recently, several schools around the country welcomed their Senior One class. As they settle into the secondary school rhythm, we sought the advice of their elders, on what they would advise those joining Senior One. / P25

Who monitors food children eat at school?

Rights to nutritious food. Nutritionists argue that offering a nutritious meal is not as expensive as it is perceived by some people. They say a school could choose to mix beans with vegetables and serve it with posho or sweet potatoes, in addition to serving a fruit at least twice a week.

BY JANE NAFULA

A social media clip, showing children, probably from an average Kindergarten, being served posho with diluted soup, containing a few beans scattered in a huge purple plastic basin that appears to be half-cooked, went viral on social media early last week. It raised questions about the quality and quantity of food served to learners in some educational institutions.

According to a senior officer at Kampala Capital Authority (KCCA) who had seen a similar video, this reminded her of her school days, when they were reportedly fed on a similar quality of food. "This is not so different from the kind of food we used to eat during our school days," she recalled.

Mr Benard Bwambale, a nutritionist and National Coordinator of Food Safety Coalition in Uganda, says children have a right to adequate, safe, and nutritious food and that it is important for the school administrators to consult nutritionists on how to provide nutritious meals that are within their school budgets.

"When you look at that video, you find that children were being served posho with some coloured water. Their right to adequate, safe, and nutritious food was compromised. There are lots of implications that can come with that kind of food. School children are growing, and what makes them grow is safe food served in the right quality and quantity," he

said, adding "It is important for schools to be guided by nutritionists."

He also suggested that cooks should be sensitised about food safety concerns and how to properly prepare food, and that guidelines for school feeding should be readily available in schools to ensure they are adhered to.

According to him, offering a nutritious meal is not as expensive as it is perceived by some people. He explained that a school could choose to mix beans with vegetables and serve it with posho or sweet potatoes, in addition to serving a fruit at least twice a week.

He also noted that a school that serves a slice of bread could substitute it with an egg, arguing that the price difference between the cost of a loaf of bread and a tray of eggs is not so big. He also expressed concern over the quality of posho supplied to some schools, noting that it is over processed, an act that he said affects its nutritional content.

Students from Kololo SSS in Kampala City line up to access a meal of posho and beans in 2024. PHOTO/STEPHEN OTAGE

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