

# Govt orders schools to enforce prevention guidelines as second term starts

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**T**he government has directed schools across the country to strictly enforce Ebola prevention measures as learners return for second term today amid concerns over the Ebola outbreak.

The Ministry of Education and Sports said it will deploy teams of experts to schools starting today to monitor compliance with the standard operating procedures (SOPs) recently issued by the Ministry of Health to prevent the spread of the deadly viral disease in learning institutions.

In an interview yesterday, Dr Joyce Kaducu, the State Minister for Primary Ed-

ucation, urged school managers, teachers, parents and transport operators to fully adhere to the health guidelines to ensure the safety of learners and staff.

"We have just been discussing the issue of confirming the opening of the second term for our children, and knowing that this is a very important term where learners have to concentrate and teachers have to intensify learning, yet it is opening at a time when the country has registered five cases of Ebola," Dr Kaducu said.

"I want to inform the stakeholders, especially school managers, that once the children report back, they should follow and critically adhere to guidelines issued by the Ministry of Health. Do

not allow visitors, provide hand-washing facilities, ensure that all learners are screened, and if anybody is found with fever or any sign of Ebola, alert health workers at the nearest health facilities for guidance," she added.

Dr Kaducu urged the public to remain calm, saying the outbreak will be manageable if preventive measures are followed. "Unlike Coronavirus, Ebola is a little bit easier to manage. The contact cases have been followed, isolated, and screened every now and then," she said.

Under the Health ministry's SOPs, schools are required to establish temperature screening points at entrances and restrict access to anyone displaying Ebola-like symptoms. The guidelines al-

so direct schools to provide hand washing facilities with clean water and soap at classroom entrances, dormitories, dining halls, toilets, and staff rooms.

Schools are further expected to regularly disinfect classrooms, dormitories, toilets, bathrooms, school vehicles, and frequently touched surfaces.

Other measures include enforcing regular hand washing, ensuring proper waste disposal, minimising non-essential gatherings and assemblies, avoiding physical contact such as handshakes and hugs, and setting aside isolation areas for suspected Ebola cases.

Schools have also been advised to conduct routine health monitoring of learners and staff while sensitising

the school community to avoid contact with body fluids such as blood, saliva, sweat, vomit, urine, and stool.

The ministry directed schools to immediately report any suspected Ebola cases to the nearest health facility, Village Health Team (VHT), or Community Health Extension Worker.

According to the Health Ministry guidelines, operators of taxis, buses, boda bodas, ferries, and boats must ensure the availability of handwashing facilities or alcohol-based sanitisers at boarding points such as taxi parks, bus parks and docking sites. Transporters are also required to disinfect vehicles regularly, display Ebola prevention messages.