

SENIOR FIVE SELECTION TO BE CONDUCTED ON FEBRUARY 18-19

PHOTO BY JULIET LUKWAGO

GOVT WARNS PARENTS AGAINST GIVING LEARNERS EXCESSIVE POCKET MONEY



Regina Nabawanuka (right), the headteacher of Mt St Mary's College Namugunga; and Victor Turyamuhaki, the headteacher of St Anthony Seed Secondary School Kyakanda looking through lists of students. This was during the placement exercise recently

By Annabel Oyera and Juliet Anna Lukwago

The Government has warned parents and guardians against giving learners excessive pocket money, saying the practice fuels indiscipline and distracts students from academic work.

Speaking during the closure of the 2026 Senior One selection exercise at the Uganda Manufacturers' Association grounds at Lugogo on Friday, the education ministry permanent secretary, Dr Kedrace Turyagyenda, said uncontrolled pocket money has increasingly become a hidden driver of behavioural challenges in schools as it creates unhealthy peer pressure.

"Giving children too much pocket money creates unnecessary

MINISTER CONDEMNNS CHARGING FEES

Primary education state minister Dr Joyce Moriku Kaducu, who represented the Minister of Education and Sports Uganda, Mrs Janet Museveni, warned that charging school fees in Universal Secondary Education schools undermines the government school policy and denies children their right to education.

"Charging money during selection or admission is not

distractions, undermines discipline and makes some students think that they have made it even before knowing how the world operates," Turyagyenda said.

allowed. Schools must resist the temptation to exploit parents," she said.

Dr Kaducu urged schools to accommodate learners with disabilities, refugees and children from mobile families within their approved capacity.

She urged school leaders to fully implement government policies that support sports, culture, innovation, and holistic learner development.

She added that it also places pressure on learners from humble backgrounds who struggle.

Turyagyenda urged school administrators to actively engage

parents and guardians, guiding them on responsible financial support that does not interfere with learning or student welfare.

"Parents must work with schools; education should not become a competition of who has more money, but a process of discipline, growth and character formation," the education ministry official said.

Turyagyenda also raised concern over reports of teacher absenteeism and weak supervision in some schools, warning that such practices undermine learning outcomes at a time when schools are absorbing unprecedented numbers of new learners.

REPORTING DATES REVEALED

Dr Turyagyenda also revealed that Senior One learners will report on March 2, while Senior Five learners will report on March 5. She also announced that the Senior Five selection exercise will be conducted on February 18-19.

Turyagyenda commended headteachers and education officials for completing the national exercise despite challenges, including limited infrastructure, inadequate funding and staffing gaps.

She acknowledged shortages, but praised school leaders for maintaining performance under difficult conditions.