

Our Schools are under Siege

By Phindezwa Tose

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Nokhwezi Primary School located in the lesser-known township of Kariega, called Khayelitsha, in the Eastern Cape, recently experienced a break-in. During the break-in which happened on 1 March 2025, the equipment was stolen. The burglars used small children, forcing them to enter inside through school windows to get hold of schoolbooks, office paper, and other things. At Nokhwezi, there is not enough of a security system, and there are no cameras either.

Speaking to the school principal, Mr Patrick Moko, about this situation, he told Karibu that, "It is a new thing that our schools are the target of robberies, in [broad] daylight. They [the robbers] get inside the school and rob educators of their phones." He continued saying that they decided that parents should visit the school during break time since the incidents started happening at the school. Currently "at school we have [only] one security guy because we don't have enough funds to hire more people for day and night."

Mr Moko said the educators are afraid that if the robbers come back to the school. They don't know if they will always make it back safely to their homes, humorously concluding, "but we have one weapon, that's chalk."

Mrs Z. Mboya who is a teacher at the school, warned against little children being involved in crime. She said that, "Our children have an attitude towards the educators and bad behaviour at school, it's unbearable, parents need to talk with their children. We must be a 3-legged pot – teacher, learner, and parent – to protect the future of our children for them not to be involved in crime and drugs."

Community member, who is also a parent of a child at the school, Zusakhe Yamile, said, "We, as community members, parents, must take care of our school. We decided to take turns to patrol so that we can protect our school from these criminals that are taking away the future of our children. Every parent must put an effort to protect the school, the teachers, and our children too."

The Eastern Cape has recently been making headlines for protection fee crimes, this new kind of crime using children to steal, must be nipped in the bud before it spreads even further.

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