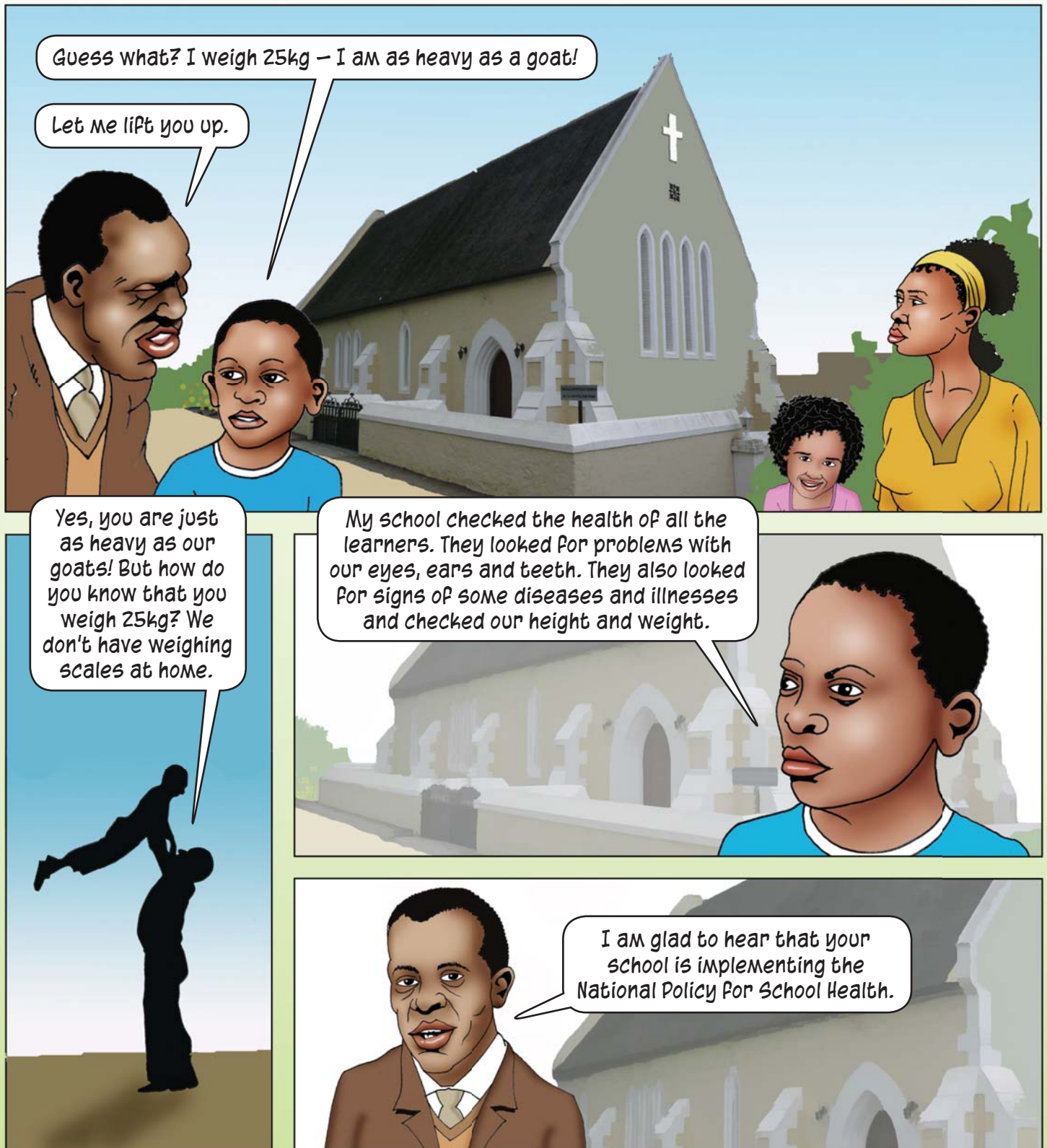


Making **YOUR** school a healthy place

Every parent, caregiver and learner can play a role in holding their school accountable **for providing quality education in a safe environment.**



What policy is that? How do you know about it?

Look at this poster. George's teacher asked me to put up a copy at our church because some parents may not see it at the school. I read it when I put it up.

I wish that Selma's school took the health and safety of the learners more seriously. There is a girl in Selma's class called Tracy. I am worried about her. I see that she often comes to school with bruises on her body. If the school did regular healthchecks, they might be able to catch problems the learners don't feel comfortable to talk about.

Why don't you talk to Selma's teacher or the Principal? You can ask them why they are not doing health screenings.

Every parent, caregiver and learner can play a role in holding their **SCHOOL ACCOUNTABLE** for providing **QUALITY EDUCATION** in a **SAFE ENVIRONMENT**



Tell us about the National Policy for School Health

Namibia is governed according to the values set out in the Namibian Constitution. The government uses laws and policies to put these values into action. One of the policies your school should be implementing is the National Policy for School Health. Your school should be providing services that will help keep learners healthy and safe.

The National Policy for School Health requires schools to:

- provide **safe water and clean sanitation facilities** for learners and teachers
- develop and put into action **health-related school policies**, such as rules against the use of tobacco, alcohol and drugs
- provide **skills-based health education**, such as establishing a health club where learners can learn about health issues
- provide **health and nutrition services** at school, such as dealing with minor injuries and providing a school feeding programme.

Each school should have a **SCHOOL HEALTH PROGRAMME** which includes these things:

1. Health services and education

- **Monitoring:** The health of learners should be checked on a regular basis. The check-ups should look for problems with eyes, ears or teeth, and signs of sickness which are common in Namibia. The height and weight signs of learners should be recorded regularly, as a child's failure to grow as expected can be a sign of health or nutrition problems. The check-ups can also cover other health issues.
- **Prevention:** The school should make sure that learners have the correct immunisations. Where a learner's immunisation schedule is not up to date, the school can encourage that learner to get immunised. Schools should also teach learners how to prevent health problems like malaria and sexually-transmitted infections including HIV/AIDS.
- **Treatment:** The school should be equipped to provide proper care to learners for minor health problems such as cuts, bruises or headaches.
- **Health education:** The school should teach learners how to take care of their own health, such as how to prevent the spread of sickness, including sexually-transmitted infections. It should make sure that learners know the best ways to take care of their own bodies and teeth.

2. Steps to promote a safe and healthy school environment

- There should be clear school rules against the use of tobacco, alcohol and drugs, and information on what to do when learners do use these substances and need help. These rules should be based on the relevant laws in Namibia, such as the Liquor Act.
- The school building and grounds should be clean and safe. Learners should help with keeping the school clean and safe at all times.

3. Nutrition services

- Each primary school should have a **school feeding programme** in place. If a school has its own gardens, it can supplement the food provided by the government. This will improve the nutritional content and variety of the food served.

4. Physical education

- The school should provide enjoyable physical activities and sports that will encourage learners to be active throughout their lives.

If you think that your school is not following the National Policy for School Health correctly, you and your parents can talk to your Principal. You can discuss the things your school should be doing. You can also contact the regional or head office of the Ministry of Education for assistance. Together we can ensure that all schools provide quality education in a healthy and safe, caring and supporting environment.

HOLDING YOUR SCHOOL ACCOUNTABLE

Step 1: Start at your school. Talk to your Life Skills teacher or teacher counsellor, your Principal and your School Board. Talk to any member of your Learner Representative Council.

Step 2: If you need to look further for help, contact the Regional School Counsellor or Inspector of Education for your school. You can get contact details from your school. The Inspector's job is to make sure that the school follows all the relevant laws and policies.

Step 3: If the Regional School Counsellor or the Inspector cannot help, contact the Director of Education at the Regional Directorate of Education, or the Chief Regional Officer at the Regional Council, or the Regional Governor.

Step 4: If Step 3 also does not help, contact the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Education at the Head Office in Windhoek:
Permanent Secretary
Ministry of Education
Private Bag 13186, Windhoek
Tel: (061) 293-3523/4



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CONVENTION ON THE
RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

This poster was produced by the Legal Assistance Centre for the Social Accountability and School Governance Project on behalf of the Ministry of Education. The project is supported by UNICEF and the European Union. The contents can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Union.
Electronic versions (PDFs) of this poster and a matching comic are available on the following websites:
www.moe.gov.na; www.sac.org.na and www.unicef.org/namibia

AT SELMA'S SCHOOL ...

We visited Selma's cousin on the weekend and went to their church. We saw a poster about the National School Health Policy. Do you know about it? It says that schools should conduct regular health screenings for learners.

We are not doctors and we have a lot of work to do already. How can we conduct health screenings as well?

The Ministry of Health and Social Services should be helping the school to implement the National School Health Policy.

I will bring it up at our staff meeting tomorrow morning.

THE NEXT DAY AT THE TEACHER'S MORNING MEETING ...

Good morning teachers. Does anyone have anything to share?

Yesterday Selma's mother asked me why we are not implementing the National School Health Policy.

We should be implementing the policy. I will find out how we can do this, and I will give you a presentation next week.

ONE WEEK LATER AT THE STAFF MEETING ...



We need to implement a health programme that includes these things:

- **Monitoring:** The school should check the health of learners on a regular basis.
- **Prevention:** The school should make sure that learners have the correct immunisations. It should also teach learners how to prevent health problems like malaria and HIV/AIDS.
- **Treatment:** The school should be equipped to provide proper care to learners for minor health problems such as cuts, bruises or headaches.
- **Health education:** The school should teach learners how to take care of their own health, such as how to prevent the spread of sickness and disease, including sexually-transmitted infections (STIs). It should make sure that learners know the best ways to take care of their own bodies and teeth.

I will speak to the Ministry of Health and Social Services and ask them to send someone to check the health of the learners. We can also ask them to immunise learners who need it. We will send letters to the parents to tell them about the screening.

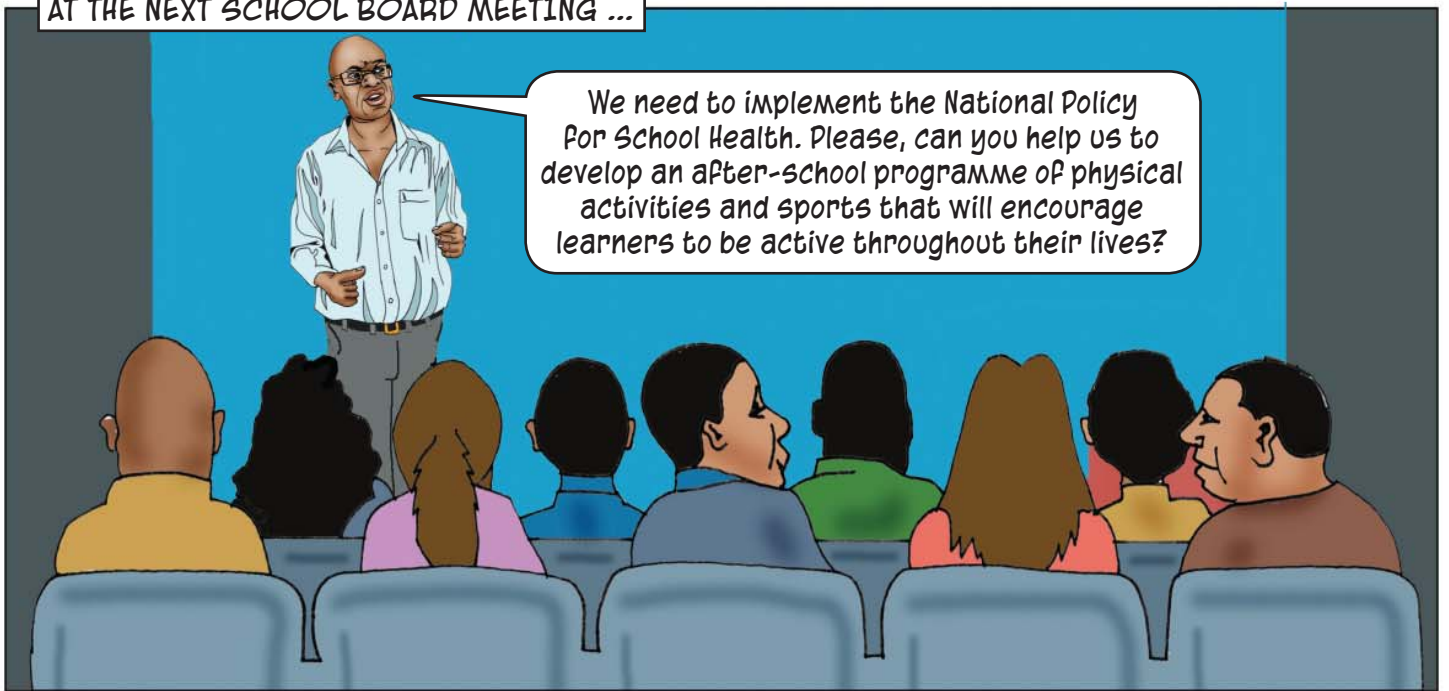


My sister is a dentist – I can ask her to give a presentation to the learners about how to care for their teeth.

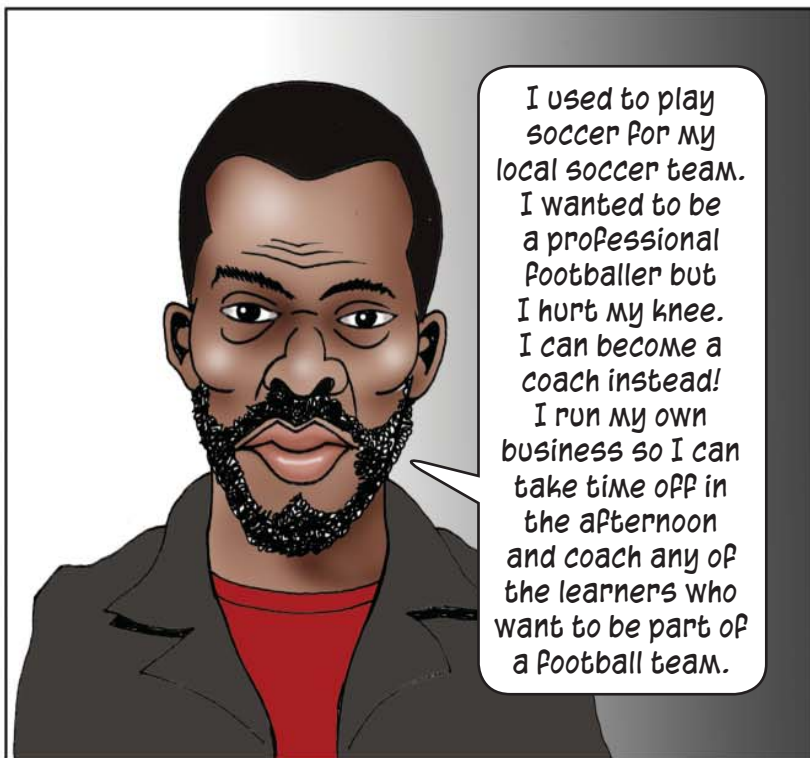




AT THE NEXT SCHOOL BOARD MEETING ...



We need to implement the National Policy For School Health. Please, can you help us to develop an after-school programme of physical activities and sports that will encourage learners to be active throughout their lives?



I used to play soccer for my local soccer team. I wanted to be a professional footballer but I hurt my knee. I can become a coach instead! I run my own business so I can take time off in the afternoon and coach any of the learners who want to be part of a football team.



I am a physiotherapist. I can give the school a plan for stretching exercises – it is important to warm up and cool down before and after exercise.



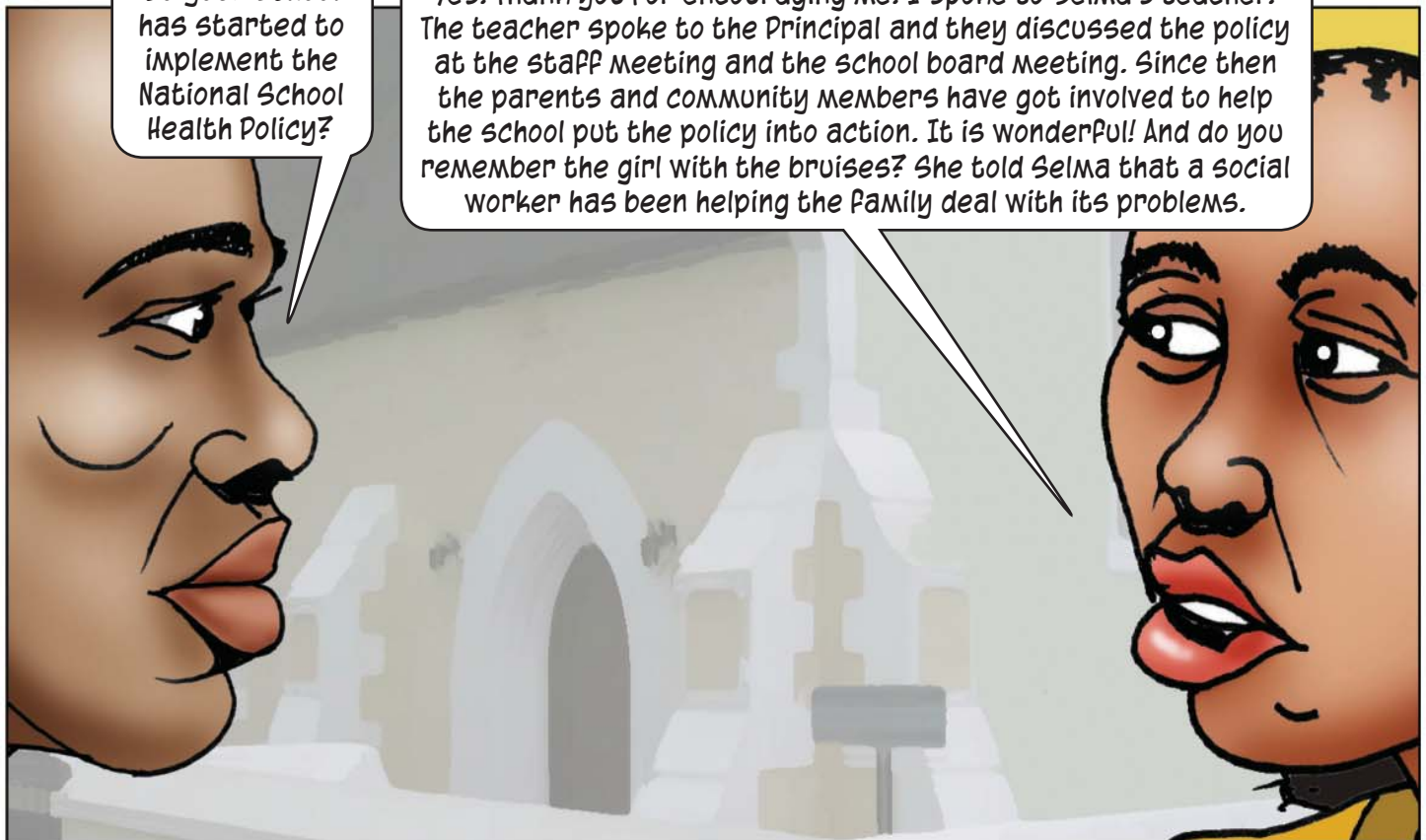
I work at the Municipality. I will find out what sports facilities are available that the learners could use. The youth centre has a netball court. The school could take the learners to the youth centre to play netball one afternoon a week.

THE FOLLOWING WEEK AT CHURCH ...



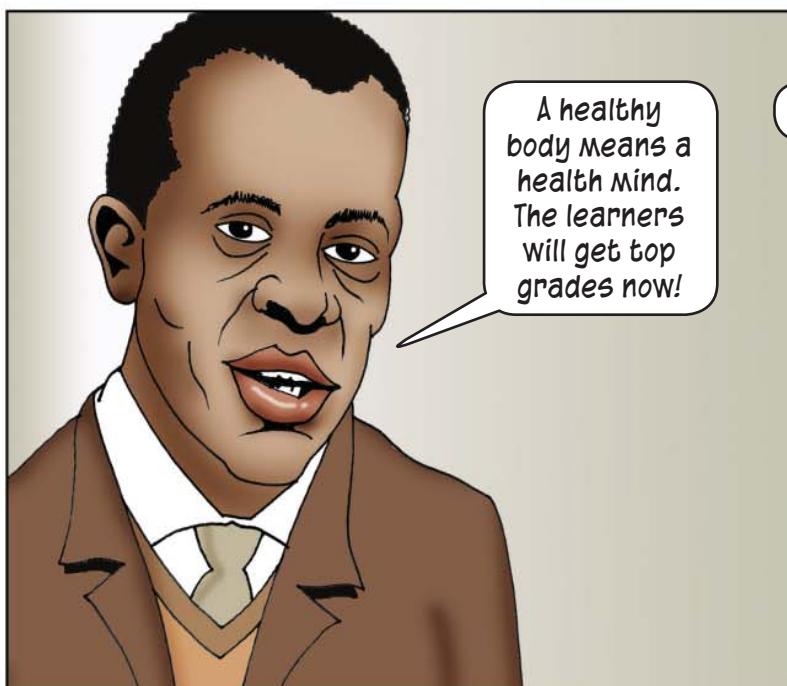
Guess what! I weigh 20kg. I am as heavy as a small goat!

And you are both as noisy as the goats too!



So your school has started to implement the National School Health Policy?

Yes. Thank you for encouraging me. I spoke to Selma's teacher. The teacher spoke to the Principal and they discussed the policy at the staff meeting and the school board meeting. Since then the parents and community members have got involved to help the school put the policy into action. It is wonderful! And do you remember the girl with the bruises? She told Selma that a social worker has been helping the family deal with its problems.



A healthy body means a health mind. The learners will get top grades now!



Aaai! We had better go and study.

Every school in Namibia should provide quality education for its learners in a safe, protected environment. Learners, their families and community members can hold schools accountable for meeting this standard. But learners and parents can only hold schools accountable if they know about the standards that the schools should be meeting. The Ministry of Education is working with development partners to provide this information. Learners, their families and community members can then use this information to work with the schools in their community to ensure that every school provides quality education in a safe, protected environment.

We all have a duty to make our schools better. All learners must commit to learning, respecting their teachers, looking after school property and preventing wastage of school resources. Learners can contribute to quality education by working and studying – and also by caring for and supporting each other. Parents and other caregivers must be active participants in their children's education. Schools must implement Namibia's laws and policies on education to the best of their ability, and reach out to parents and community members to encourage them to work together with the school to deliver quality education to all children in Namibia.

This comic is one of the materials produced for the Ministry of Education's **Social Accountability and School Governance Project**. There are three other comics in this range, and three posters. To get printed copies of these and other materials produced under this project, contact your Regional School Counsellor, or the office of the Ministry of Education in your region, or the National Resource Centre (contact details below).

National Resource Centre

Ministry of Education
Government Office Park, Luther Street, Windhoek
Telephone (+264) (0)61-2933004

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www.moe.gov.na; www.lac.org.na and www.unicef.org/namibia