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Anger Over Cellphone Video Distribution

Cape Argus (Cape Town)

NEWS
22 November 2007
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By Natasha Prince
Cape Town

The parents of a Grade 9 pupil who was assaulted this week, allegedly by a former pupil, are outraged that the cellphone video clip showing the attack is being distributed at the school.

Police arrested an 18-year-old a former pupil at the school in connection with the assault. He has since been released on a warning.

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The Grade 9 pupil, who attends Islamia College in Lansdowne, laid a charge of assault at the Lansdowne police station on Tuesday.

He asked not to have his name mentioned following the distribution of the video clip.

The school principal, Shaheem Galant, said on behalf of the school that they were very upset by the incident, that they had not anticipated it and that they had offered support to the family.

The Grade 9 pupil's mother said she was extremely upset and would not be taking the matter "lying down".

She added that her son was further traumatised by having video footage of the incident distributed via cellphone.

"It (the assault) was premeditated," she said, adding that her husband had seen the footage and was shocked.

"He (her son) is fine now, he has a couple of bruises from the way he was banged against the walls," she said.

"We put our child in a private school thinking he would be safe but it seems we sent him straight into the danger zone."

Galant said the incident happened after school hours and that the school was conducting its own investigation.

"We are going to need the co-operation of parents to reduce the cellphone usage at schools and teachers will need to be extra vigilant," he said.

The former pupil allegedly arrived at the school on Monday and confronted the Grade 9 pupil in the boys' toilets.

He is alleged to have accused the pupil of having said things about another pupil and was then filmed on cellphone cameras while he allegedly attacked the younger boy, hitting him in the face.

Police spokesperson Elliot Sinyangana confirmed the arrest.

He said the suspect was to appear in the Wynberg magistrate's court on Thursday on an assault charge.

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