

Autopsy reveals drowning as cause of Lagos two-year-old pupil's death

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The autopsy result on the death of a two-year-old pupil, Raphella Ogbodo, whose lifeless body was found in the swimming pool of Smiley Kids Montessori School, in the Sangotedo area of Lagos, has been released.

PUNCH Metro reports that a woman, identified simply as Ella, called for justice following the death of her daughter, Raphaella, in a swimming pool during school hours.

She explained that her daughter left for school on Wednesday, January 15, but did not return alive.

There were claims that she was electrocuted before being dropped into the school's swimming pool to make it look like drowning.

A document of the autopsy result seen by PUNCH Metro on Thursday revealed asphyxia and drowning as the cause of death.

Asphyxia means a lack of oxygen or excess of carbon dioxide in the body, which is usually caused by interruption of breathing and causes unconsciousness, compared to suffocation.

“In the course of the discreet investigation, an autopsy was performed on the remains of the deceased, Raphella Ogbodo, by the Chief Pathologist at the Lagos State University Teaching Hospital and the cause of death was attributed to asphyxia and drowning.

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“The complainant and other witnesses volunteered their statements, while the suspects’ statements were recorded under caution. The report herein is an expert report from a Certified Government Agency/Ministry, which refuted the alleged electrocution of the deceased,” the report read.

The document indicated that the case file had been forwarded to the Directorate of Public Prosecutions for vetting and legal advice.

It was recalled that in response to the incident, the Lagos State Government ordered the closure of the school to allow for a thorough investigation and to identify potential lapses that led to the death.

The management of the school also said it was cooperating fully with the police and government authorities to ensure a thorough and transparent investigation into the incident.

The head of the Nursery Department, Tonia Igbafe, class teacher Helen Ebodaghe, and nanny Habibat Mohammed have been arrested and charged with conspiracy, negligent acts, and suspected murder in connection with the death of the pupil.

The suspects are currently being held at the Kirikiri female custodial facility.