DISABILITY EQUALITY POLICY

1. General Statement of Policy

1.1 The College is committed to the equal treatment of disabled pupils (including prospective pupils) and staff, and its policy is to work towards eliminating disadvantages for disabled pupils and staff. The College's aims are to improve accessibility to the curriculum, premises and written material through the development and implementation of an accessibility plan. The College's policy is implemented via the provision of training for staff, the review and development of policies and procedures.

1.2 In the UK the Disability Discrimination Act (2005) requires the College to increase access to education for disabled pupils in three ways by:

- Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum;
- Improving the environment of the College to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can take advantage of their education; and
- Ensuring that disabled pupils can access, read and understand all relevant information.

Although the College is based in Malaysia, Epsom College in Malaysia seeks to follow this UK guidance and its policies and procedures are based upon UK principles.

1.3 The College works actively to promote equality and foster positive attitudes and commitment to an education for equality. We do this by:

- Maintaining a Learning Support Register;
- Having systems in place to enable the Head of Learning Support to disseminate information promptly;
- Building strong links between the Admissions Department, Learning Support Department, EAL department and pupil recruitment agencies to ensure that any potential pupils are not discriminated against during the recruitment and selection process;
- Having detailed access arrangements in public exams in place for those students who need them;

- Maintaining strong links with the relevant outside agencies;
- Employing special needs teachers, at the Prep School level too.

2 Admissions

2.1 The College has an ethos of educating and developing each pupil to the best of his or her potential and in line with the general standards achieved by other pupils, in order to create a confident, happy, well-educated and well-rounded individual. In order to maintain that ethos and the educational standards for which it is known, the College will assess all pupils for admission on the basis of its standard selection criteria from time to time.

2.2 The College's policy is to apply those selection criteria equally to all potential pupils regardless of any disability of which the College is aware. Those criteria will continue to be applied throughout the pupil's College career.

2.3 However the College's policy is also to eliminate from the admissions process, as far as possible, any significant disadvantages which may be encountered by disabled applicants. The College acknowledges the expertise of the disabled pupil and their parents and will seek their input. Parents of disabled children will be invited for a preliminary meeting with the Headmaster to discuss ways in which any disadvantages could be lessened or eliminated from the admissions process.

3. Physical Accessibility

3.1 The College operates the common system of having dedicated subject classrooms, so that specialist materials and equipment can be located in one place. This necessarily entails pupils moving between classrooms and across the College site during the course of the College day.

3.2 The College is housed in a number of academic, sporting and boarding (House) buildings. Due to the layout of the College's site and the nature of its accommodation, problems of accessibility may be encountered by disabled pupils from time to time, which can place those pupils at a disadvantage. However, the College has taken steps to develop accessibility, through incorporating a lift in the main academic building (serving all floors in which the classrooms are housed) and installing ramp systems leading to the Boarding Houses. A lift system is also available in the main sports complex on the campus.

3.3 To further improve accessibility for disabled pupils across the site would require major physical alterations both to buildings and to grounds. Some of these alterations are impossible due to the nature of the grounds or the design of the buildings themselves. Others would require significant and prohibitive financial investment.

3.4 The College will strive to make reasonable adjustments to improve physical access, but such matters will always be viewed in the light of budgetary considerations.

4. Priorities

4.1 The College encourages all pupils to access every area of the curriculum and to participate in trips, events and all extra-curricular activities.

4.2 The staff recruitment process does not differentiate between disabled and other applications. Disabled applicants are encouraged to attend interview if they meet the minimum criteria.

4.3 All disciplinary issues are dealt with in line with the normal school policies. Incidents involving disabled pupils are reviewed to ensure that where possible there is no repetition in the future. The PSHE programme highlights issues relating to disability discrimination to help pupils develop an understanding and tolerance of the issues involved.

5. Implementation and Monitoring

5.1 The College has already made a number of adaptations to buildings for the disabled and will continue this programme as funds permit.

5.2 The College will review the impact of this policy on disabled pupils by monitoring their academic and social development. The College will use feedback from disabled members of the community to inform and develop future plans.

5.3 The Education and Pastoral Committee of the Governors will recommend new policies or procedures where they are necessary to ensure that disabled pupils are not discriminated against or where the introduction of a new policy would constitute a reasonable adjustment.

Comments or suggestions on the accessibility of the site by disabled pupils, staff or visitors are always welcome and should be made to the Bursar.

This Policy has been drawn up using the UK guidance in the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001, the UK Equality Act 2010 and the Disability Discrimination Act 2005.