



MISSING PUPIL POLICY – PREP SCHOOL

1. Policy Statement and Aims

This policy applies to staff (including volunteers), pupils and parents of Epsom College in Malaysia. This policy should be read in conjunction with the College's Safeguarding (Child Protection) Policy and Supervision of Pupils Policy. The procedures in this policy may be adapted as necessary. The Headmaster, Head of Prep School and Deputy Head (Pastoral) have a wide discretion in relation to the procedures in this policy.

Through the operation of this policy we aim to:

- promote the safety of pupils at all times;
- ensure that College staff know how to respond if a pupil goes missing.

For the purposes of this policy, the term 'missing' refers to a pupil being absent without authorisation or explanation.

2. Publication

This policy is published to all staff via the Common Room Handbook. Parents may request a copy from the College or review the policy on the College website.

3. Responsibility

The Governors delegate appropriate responsibilities for the day to day management of the College to the Headmaster. In practice, all members of staff contribute to the safety of pupils at the College by providing appropriate supervision in accordance with the College's Supervision of Pupils policy, the staff duty rota and any other directions of the Headmaster and Executive Leadership Team.

4. Missing Pupils

A pupil who is not present for registration, or is absent from a lesson, activity or is found to be missing from the Boarding House overnight is deemed to be a missing pupil. All members of staff are instructed to report a missing Prep School pupil between the hours of 8.15am and 4.00pm to the Head of Prep School immediately (or in their absence the Deputy Head of Prep), following the procedures as set out

below. For Prep school boarders the Head of Prep School should be notified of any missing pupils between 8.15am and 5.30pm, after which time the pupil's HMM should be contacted in the first instance.

- a) In the event a Prep School pupil is missing from morning registration who has not yet arrived at school, procedures shall be followed as outlined in the **College Attendance Policy – Senior School**.
- b) In the event a Prep School pupil is missing from morning registration who boarded the previous evening, the procedures below shall be followed if the Head of Prep school cannot immediately locate the pupil via the HMM in the Boarding House/via mobile phone.
- c) In the event a Prep School pupil is missing from afternoon registration who is known to have been in school earlier in the day, the procedure below shall be followed if the Class Teacher cannot immediately locate the pupil.
- d) In the event a Prep School pupil is missing from any lesson or activity without notification of their absence by the pupil's Class Teacher/Teaching Assistant, the teacher of the lesson/activity must follow the procedure as set out below.

After receiving notification that a pupil is missing, the Head of Prep School (and/or pupil's HMM in the case of a prep school boarder) will follow the procedures as set out below (with a record kept of each action by the Head of Prep/HMM):

- The Medical Centre will be contacted to see if the pupil has reported sick.
 - In the event the pupil is a Boarder, the pupil's HMM shall be contacted so a check can be made in the Boarding House.
 - A thorough search of the whole school will be set in hand by as many staff as possible (see Appendix 1 for details of areas to be searched). This will include checking the Guard Houses to see if the pupil has left the College grounds, either on foot or by car.
 - The teachers who taught that pupil earlier in the day and other pupils, including friends of the missing pupil, will be questioned in order to ascertain at what time he/she went missing.
 - The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and the Headmaster will be informed.
 - A phone call would be made to the pupil's parents or guardian explaining what has happened, describing the steps that have been set in motion and inviting them to come to the school at once.
 - A fire drill might be held in order to ensure that he/she is not on the site.
 - The Police are contacted and their advice would be followed.
 - The Chairman of Governors is informed.
 - The insurers would be informed.
 - A full investigation into the circumstances would be carried out. Witnesses would be interviewed and asked to provide written statement.
- e) In the event a Prep School pupil is missing from the Boarding House overnight and cannot be immediately located via a search of the Boarding House or via mobile phone, the HMM will follow the procedure as outlined below,
- The Medical Centre will be contacted to see if the pupil has reported sick.
 - Friends of the missing pupil will be questioned to ascertain any information.
 - The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and the Headmaster are informed.
 - Checks will be made at the Guard Houses to see if the pupil has left the College grounds, either on foot or by car.
 - A thorough search of the whole school will be set in hand by as many staff as possible.

- A phone call would be made to the pupil's parents or guardian explaining what has happened, describing the steps that have been set in motion and inviting them to come to the school at once.
- A fire drill might be held in order to ensure that he/she is not on the site.
- The Police are contacted and their advice would be followed.
- The Chairman of Governors will be informed.
- The insurers would be informed.
- A full investigation into the circumstances would be carried out. Witnesses would be interviewed and asked to provide written statement.

5. Procedure for Prep School pupils missing during or following a school trip or visit

The College's Educational Visits policy and detailed procedures for staff organising visits provide a framework for managing school visits, taking into account the College's safeguarding and health and safety responsibilities. Appropriate staff supervising ratios are agreed by the Deputy Head (Pastoral) and supervising arrangements will be relevant to the locality, age of pupils and type of activity. The following procedures apply if a Prep School pupil goes missing on a College trip or visit or has not arrived at College following a journey. The member of staff in charge will:

- attempt to contact the pupil via mobile phone if they are known to be in possession of one;
- organise for accompanying staff / volunteers to search the immediate vicinity and/or the group's recent locations;
- check whether there were any delays or changes to the journey;
- check with other pupils and ask them if they have any knowledge of the missing pupil's whereabouts.

If the pupil is not found, the member of staff in charge will contact the Head of Prep School. The Head of Prep will contact the Deputy Head (Pastoral) as the College's Designated Safeguarding Officer who will inform the Headmaster, and the pupil's parents. If the trip is taking place during College holidays, the designated senior member of staff contact for the trip will be contacted.

The Head of Prep School/senior member of staff contact will agree with the member of staff in charge of the trip the procedure for contacting the pupil's parents and if necessary, the local police.

6. Information to be provided to the Police

When the College contacts the Police, the following information should be provided:

- the pupil's name
- the pupil's age
- an up to date photograph if possible
- the pupil's height, physical description and any physical peculiarities
- any disability, learning difficulty or special educational needs that the pupil may have
- the pupil's home address and telephone number
- a description of the clothing the pupil is thought to be wearing
- any relevant comments made by the pupil such as "I'm going to run away".

The information will then be passed to the various police stations through police channels.

7. Once a pupil has been found

If an extensive search of the College premises (or the surrounding area on a school trip) has been initiated due to a pupil going missing, the Deputy Head (Pastoral) will meet with the pupil and consider the following:

- whether the absence was deliberate or if the pupil has broken College rules in which case sanctions may apply
- whether the pupil is distressed about some element of College life and what action may need to be taken to resolve the situation
- whether there are safeguarding concerns, in which case the matter will be referred to the Designated Person for Child Protection (the Deputy Head (Pastoral)).

8. Children Missing from Education

All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to a full time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. The Malaysian Department for Education has a duty to establish, as far as it is possible to do so, the identity of children of compulsory school age who are missing education in their area.

A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. All staff should follow the College's procedures for unauthorised absence and for dealing with children that go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in future.

Epsom College in Malaysia has in place appropriate safeguarding policies, procedures and responses for children who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions. It is essential that all staff are alert to signs to look out for and the individual triggers to be aware of when considering the risks of potential safeguarding concerns such as travelling to conflict zones, Female Genital Mutilation and forced marriage.

The College will inform the Department for Education of any pupil below the age of 12 who is a Malaysian Citizen and is going to be removed from the register where the pupil:

- 1) has been taken out of the College by their parents and the school has received written notification from the parent they are being educated outside the school system e.g. home education;
- 2) has been certified by the College Medical Centre and/or College Counsellor as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school before ceasing to be of compulsory school age, and neither he/she nor his/her parent has indicated the intention to continue attending school after ceasing to be of compulsory school age; or
- 3) has been permanently excluded from the College.

9. Review

This policy is reviewed annually, or as and when new statutory guidance to schools may apply, and updated as necessary. In undertaking the review the Deputy Head (Pastoral) will take into account any records of incidents that indicate that there may be a problem with supervision, pupil support or security at the College and any issues raised by individual members of staff, parents and pupils.

The Head of Prep/Deputy Head (Pastoral) will keep a full written record of any missing pupil incident involving the police.