

Amelia Davison Head Pupil Manifesto



2020-2021

Ambition | Respect | Community

Why I'm running for Head Pupil -

I have been a pupil at Knox Academy for a full five years now and have attained many new skills and attributes in my time here so far. In my first year of being a pupil at Knox, I was still trying to find who I was and I lacked confidence in my abilities. I have always looked up to the pupil leadership team, and I never thought I would have the confidence to try for it myself. However, after being here for many years and gaining faith in myself over time, thanks to my fellow pupils and staff members in the Knox Academy community, I have decided to run for head pupil. I hope that this will help me to inspire confidence in the younger generations of Knox pupils, like past senior pupils did for me. I would also love to give back as much as I can to the staff here at Knox Academy and our surrounding community, as they have supported me through-out my academic career.



Why would I be a good fit for Head Pupil? -

After talking to members of previous leadership teams they all stated that although being Head Pupil is a very rewarding role it can also be quite challenging, that being said, I came to the conclusion that a good Head Pupil should have three main attributes that help to make a successful and strong member of the leadership team. These being a variation of **encouraging**, **diligent** and **committed**, these three key attributes are all things I believe I possess.

While in S4 and S5 I decided to take part in the Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Award. This consisted of two expedition walks which were two days and one night of walking through hills and the countryside. Towards the end of the second expedition we had a 70 metre incline up a hill to reach the top and the end of the trek. While doing so everyone was very tired, frustrated and wanted to give up. I knew the only way to get everyone up was through **encouragement**. So for the entire rest of the way up I tried to be as positive as I could, and I made sure everyone knew how close we were to the end and to finishing the long and exhausting walk. DofE definitely taught me that to be a strong member of any team and to become a good leader that **encouragement** is very important. If people don't know how well they are doing and don't get any positive feedback then they will never achieve half the things they believe they can.

Another important quality I believe a Head Pupil should possess is **commitment**. While being at Knox Academy I was part of the School's competitive swim team for a few years and loved competing alongside fellow pupils. I learnt very quickly that to make a strong member of the team, I had to be **committed**. Not just to my team but to my races, if I didn't try my hardest in each race we would have never won the awards we did. Through being **committed** to hours of training, and representing the school in a positive way, it allowed me to continue racing with the school for several years and made memories I will never forget! As well as being part of the Knox Swim team, I was also part of Haddington Swimming club for many years. For two of those years swimming I decided to start coaching the younger groups of swimmers. Coaching young people really gave me the opportunity to help them build on their skills. I also believe I helped them to build their **confidence** in themselves, as when their technique improved, they would be able to swim faster and this would help them to win more races. It made me so happy to see one of my swimmers succeed and have **confidence** in themselves. Although coaching took a lot of **commitment**, it is something I am so happy I was a part of and I wouldn't change anything about the experience, as I also

learnt new skills such as effective communication, organisation and patience. These things I will never forget.

Through both DofE, Swimming club and many other things I've learnt that **diligence** is also a very important attribute to have, if you are not **diligent** you will not be as successful in things you do. I believe I have been diligent and hard working through-out my time here at Knox Academy. I believe this is true as if I had not worked to my full potential, I would not have been able to achieve the qualifications I've already gained here at Knox. This diligence, commitment and encouragement I have learnt during my senior years at school will help me throughout my lifetime, even when I move on from school into the working world.

My Manifesto Policies -

While thinking about my manifesto and policies, I created a survey asking questions about how people feel about certain things in the school. This survey was sent out to Knox Academy pupils and some staff members, as I wanted not only pupil input but staff input as well.

This allowed me to identify a few things that people would like us to change and/or what they see as a problem in our school. These topics include...

1. Further strengthening our relationships with the community, for example, the elderly -

With the current COVID situation going on around the world, I believe that now more than ever, our community should become closer. With nearly 40% of pupils saying that they believe the school doesn't have strong connections with the surrounding community, I intend to work with elderly members of the public and care homes to include them as much as possible in school activities such as concerts, drama performances etc.

- This will be done via either **video call** or them **physically** coming into the school, this would depend on the circumstances as COVID currently restricts certain aspects. I would adapt to that challenge however.
- By including them in these activities, it will not only **strengthen our connection with the community**, but it will also majorly benefit these members of the public, as being in lockdown can make them feel very isolated and forgotten. Doing this we will show them how much we care and think about them, as well as showing off the amount of talent we have here at Knox Academy.

2. More junior leadership involvement within the school -

While being a part of the junior school I was never confident enough to speak up about the problems I felt existed in the school, and I know it's probably still true now for lots of pupils today. Although opportunities such as pupil council etc came up, I never felt confident enough to join due to the stigmas surrounding it. This being said, I propose that at the end of each term **anonymous surveys/questionnaires** are emailed out to pupils from every year group.

- This survey will include questions about teaching styles, school opportunities, school activities and general school involvement.
- It will allow for pupils to be **honest about their opinions** and feelings about the school as it will be completely anonymous. This will benefit the school as we will be able to tackle the problems pupils feel should be addressed, and in doing so it will not only benefit the school in the **short term**, but also **long term**.

3. Introduce a pupil helping pupil mental health scheme -

In the survey I recently conducted, over 50% of pupils said that they do not feel comfortable talking to a member of staff about any mental health problems they may be having. To help make this conversation easier I propose to set up a **pupil to pupil** mental health scheme. By introducing this it may help more students come out about their problems, as I know it may be quite daunting to talk to a member of staff straight away.

- By using older pupil volunteers to help start this conversation, it may make it easier for other pupils to talk to someone their own age.
- I intend to see what training and development support may be available to help ensure we have the appropriate skills and knowledge to help provide this important service.
- Of course there is the **concern** about the pressure that may be applied to the older pupils from listening to these problems, therefore sufficient safeguarding and signposting would need to be in place, as this scheme is not meant for just the older pupils to fix. It is for them to start the conversation so that whoever is having problems will feel more comfortable when signposted to a member of staff or someone with the correct training.
- This **buddying system** will allow those pupils that are having a tough time right now, especially under the current circumstances, to have someone always there to talk to who is more close to their age group.

4. Furthering our connections with the primary schools -

Currently the school **does** have a strong connection with Kings Meadow primary school, but not as much for the Infants school. With over 30% of Knox pupils and teachers saying that we don't have a strong connection with the primary school's. I will introduce a **Primary school Pupil involvement scheme**, where pupils from the Infants school attend some of our school concerts and performances, and introduce a Knox and Primary School Ceilidh.

- This would involve bringing some of the Infants school up to Knox to take part in a Ceilidh together. This would help to bring our community closer together, as involvement is a huge part of making a community.
- This would benefit Knox in the **short term** as well as the **long term** as in doing this we are strengthening our connections and involvement with the younger years who will someday be a part of our Knox Academy Family.

Thank you for taking some time out of your day to read my manifesto, I hope that these are some things you feel strongly about as well? I feel these policies I have decided on are manageable and realistic to achieve, they will help our school not just now, but in many years to come, and capture the motto of the school - Ambition, Respect and Community!

Please feel free to email me at ka15odavison@edubuzz.org if you have any questions or would like to talk, and remember **VOTE AMELIA** :)