



HEAD PUPIL MANIFESTO 2020/21



JULIA DALE

About Me

Hello! My name is Julia Dale. Throughout primary school, I was hugely confident, performing one-woman shows to the class, starting numerous clubs, and throwing myself at every available opportunity. Starting Knox rocked my confidence. I became quiet and withdrawn, which stopped me putting myself forward for leadership roles. However, with grateful support from teachers, peers, and the leadership team, I regained that self-belief and the old me emerged towards the end of S4. This encouraged me to run for deputy house captain and I was lucky enough to share the role last year, since participating in various more leadership opportunities. By representing the school as Head Pupil, I would like to give all pupils, loud or quiet, the voice I wish I had in my earlier years of Knox, and in doing so give back something to those who invested time in me.

During this period of lockdown, I have been engaging with the surrounding community. I have been working closely with the Community Kitchen, helping with advertising and promotion, and also with delivering meals. This made me realise how strong a sense of shared purpose can be. In Autumn/Winter of 2019 I also was part of the YPI project and lucky enough to be selected as a finalist. This improved my ability to plan, raise awareness of charities and present to a hall full of people, which is no mean feat!

WHAT CAN I OFFER AS A HEAD PUPIL?

My personal beliefs of Opportunity, Equality and Kindness mirror the school values of Ambition, Respect and Community. I believe my policies perfectly embody all these qualities. During these turbulent times the school will go through lots of changes, so I aim to keep a level of consistency across my policies in these areas. My policies are ambitious, but I strongly believe they are achievable with the help of both the pupil and senior leadership team. I would greatly appreciate if you took the time to read my policies. Thank you!

I pride myself on being kind, friendly and approachable. I have worked at a very busy cafe since the age of 13 and I am used to engaging with a wide range of people of all ability and age. This has allowed me to gain invaluable communication skills and confidence - an essential quality for the Head Pupil. I believe my experience working for so long has made me more approachable and has given me the confidence to talk openly to a variety of people. This has not only improved my teamwork skills but also how I engage with the public and my peers. Balancing violin practice, a weekly shift, volunteering and keeping on top of school work proves my hardworking nature which will help me to achieve my policies and manage my time effectively as head pupil.

As Deputy House Captain for Garleton last year, my involvement with the pupil council gave me good insight into issues being faced by pupils and in what areas we can improve. I believe being head pupil will give me a greater platform to raise these concerns and build ways to properly address them with senior members of staff and the local community. Through the completion of my Bronze and Silver DofE I have demonstrated resilience. Personally, completing the Duke of Edinburgh awards was one of the hardest challenges I have ever faced, not only physically but mentally - due to adverse weather conditions on both practice and qualifier I did not have the self belief I should have and let my anxiety get the better of me. I recognise that everyone has different personal challenges and goals - some will be voiced and some perhaps less obvious and more modest. My experiences through difficult times like DofE have made me more empathetic and understanding of your problems, no matter how small. As your head pupil I will do my best to encourage everyone to achieve their goals, reach their potential and be resilient, as I know how hard it can be.

1. Supporting pupils - Opportunity

All stages of secondary school, even to those not transitioning from P7, can be scary. I would like to create a series of YouTube videos, a collaboration run by seniors. Ideally, I would like to get as many people involved as possible with video requests submitted through registration teachers or topics which we would have found helpful when we were younger. These videos would cover a range of topics from a pupil's perspective, such as what to expect as an S1, what to do the night before an exam, how to revise, what to bring to school, dress code, best places for lunch, volunteering and job opportunities etc. I feel that these videos engage the younger audience who now spend a lot of their time on social media, it would be easily accessible on the school YouTube page and advertised through Twitter and The Bulletin. I am confident it would be comforting to have help and advice from people in the same school as you, as I know I would have really benefitted from this idea!

5. Celebrating diversity - Equality

Knox Academy is already a very progressive school, through our amazing organisations such as the LGBTQ+ Allies group, our Eco committee and more. I would, however, like to expand this and raise awareness of racial issues within Knox as I feel like this isn't spoken about enough. It's essential we keep up the good work and I propose we celebrate this by facilitating an awareness week to highlight diversity, the differences that make us unique, and the everyday challenges faced by LGBTQ+ people, POC, those with disabilities and those dealing with mental health issues. This would include highlighting the importance of movements such as BLM and the Stonewall riots through assemblies presented to each year group when school resumes.



**JULIA DALE WILL
NOT FAIL – VOTE
JULIA!**

2. Get Knox Talking - Kindness

Mental health is often difficult to talk about and I would like to recognise this by proposing Get Knox Talking. I propose that teachers put a sign on their classroom door which outlines the times and days they are free and in their classroom. Teachers would not have to take any extra time out of their day to participate they can choose when they are free for a chat and update it regularly. This would mean that during these specific times pupils can go to their classrooms to talk whether this is about mental health, something on the news, what they did at the weekend. Not only is it crucial to get thoughts out in the open sometimes, but this initiative will strengthen relationships between teachers and students, creating a better, friendlier classroom environment. Many teachers are currently mental health trained but very few pupils are aware of who these teachers are and where to find them. This initiative would not only highlight them but would allow me and the leadership team to help raise awareness of the everyday struggles some of us face.

4. LIBRARY SWAP SERVICE – Kindness

I would like to introduce a hub where pupils and teachers can donate or offer a swap service. Ideally, this would be in the library and pupils can donate all types of resource material such as textbooks and stationery. This would not only help reduce waste and improve access to a wide range of exam materials or everyday resources, but potentially offer a lifeline to those less financially able to source these.

I am also keen to give pupils and teachers the opportunity to bring in Tupperware and cutlery from home to use in the food court for lunches. Not only would this reduce the amount we spend on polystyrene containers but, like the library swap service, also reduce the amount of waste we produce, making us a kinder, more eco-friendly school.

3. Enterprise event - Opportunity

I am sure we all remember projects such as the soup, sandwiches and smoothies project and Dragons Den in junior years. Similar to this I would like to introduce the enterprise event for charity. This would involve small groups of students across all year groups creating and organising the running of 'funfair' stalls such as guess the number of sweets in the jar, pie the teacher etc. Just like Dragons Den and soup, sandwiches and smoothies they would need to come up with their own idea, how they present it and the running of it. These stalls would be held on a school wide event day, such as sports day, with all profits donated to local charities. This would not only strengthen our relationship with the community, but also provide students with leadership and business skills opportunities, and the chance for students to have some fun getting creative for a good cause!