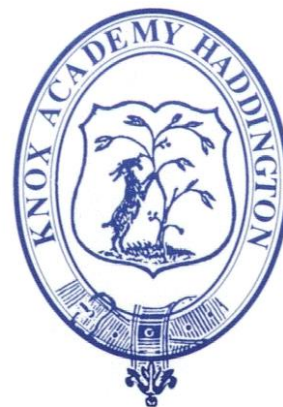


Caitlin Raeburn

Head Pupil Manifesto



WHY VOTE FOR ME?

Knox has been like a second home to me for the past five years. Throughout this time I've been through some of the toughest but also the best years of my life. Without the support I have been given at Knox there's a great chance I wouldn't be standing for head pupil today. Due to this I want to give something back to the school that has made sure I've thrived in times of great doubt.

I believe I possess many qualities that would be hugely beneficial and essential in the role of Head Pupil. I am a highly determined and outgoing individual. I don't back down from problems and as head pupil I would make sure all my policies were fully implemented and would continue to improve them throughout the year. As an outgoing pupil I enjoy speaking to people from different groups and years. I have worked doing work experience at St Mary's Nursery. This experience helped me to gain indispensable leadership and communication skills. In the role of Head Pupil I would be able to lead meetings and be an excellent representative for Knox Academy. I would aim to be as easy to talk to as possible and try to be a friendly face that people would be comfortable talking to.

Although being confident and outgoing is a huge part of being Head Pupil, as a leader you need to be able to listen and you need to be able to follow. As Head Pupil I would be representing every pupil in Knox and therefore it is essential that I could communicate the views and concerns of pupils effectively. Teamwork is a hugely important aspect of this as without it nothing would get done. I enjoy working as part of a team and understand the great importance of doing so. Last year, I participated in the Youth Philanthropy Initiative programme and our group successfully made it into the final. This was a result of our ability to work together as a group and communicate effectively. The experience helped me to gain essential conflict resolution skills that would be of a necessity in pursuing the role of Head Pupil. If I am elected as head pupil not only will I aim to lead this school to better things but I will follow the concerns of pupils and use my position of leadership to work effectively with my peers, teachers and SMT to create changes that would improve the school.

MY POLICIES

1. Tackle bullying in Knox through a variety of approaches

The first policy connects to one of the main values of Knox which is respect. After speaking to many pupils in the younger years, it is clear that there is a huge problem with bullying that hasn't been tackled effectively. This, arguably, is the most important policy as no other policy is going to have any true impact for a pupil who doesn't even feel safe walking down a corridor. At this moment of time, bullies are repeatedly left to continue, in most cases, with nothing more than a quick conversation, without an evident punishment.

To tackle this issue I want to make the bullying policy clear and have it implemented consistently. This would mean bullying would be treated in the same way as breaking any school rule would, in the sense that there is a clear punishment. My second approach to this issue would be to have bullying and its consequences discussed openly within classrooms not just in PSE. An example of this could be acting out scenarios in drama to help students, particularly in younger years, to understand the subtle signs of bullying and how to recognise when it is happening around them. I would also aim to bring in people from bullying charities and organisations to give talks to classes and year groups.

These are our lives, nearly a third of our school lives will be spent going to school at Knox. Bullying is not something that can be disregarded and ignored. We will all leave Knox someday but the detrimental impact that bullying can have on someone may stay with them for the rest of their life.

2. Create stronger connections between Knox and our community

One of the three main values at Knox is 'community' and as a school we are said to have strong community connections. Although, this may be true for Knox as a whole, the majority of pupils are not actively involved in our community. This is not necessarily because pupils don't care enough to take an interest but, in retrospect, because opportunities, such as volunteering, are not widely publicised in Knox.

In order to create stronger connections, I will make opportunities known to all pupils through a dedicated section to volunteering and other community events on the school website. This section would also be used to praise and acknowledge the dedicated work and excellent impact pupils at Knox are having on our community.

3. Create a pupil tutoring network

The last main value of Knox is ambition. I believe that this opportunity will help students achieve and attain a greater amount of ambition in regards to their educational studies. By giving pupils, who are taking advanced higher in a subject or have just completed the higher course, the opportunity to tutor younger students, both the 'tutor' and 'tutee' would greatly benefit from the experience. The tutor will gain essential skills such as organization, persistence and improved communication skills. These skills are invaluable in life regardless of what path the pupil takes after leaving Knox. On the other hand, the tutee will not only improve in the subject but have someone they are able to confide in when they don't feel comfortable talking to a teacher or their friends. This would also be an excellent opportunity for pupils who are not in the financial situation to be able to afford a tutor the same opportunities to gain the benefits as those who have a professional tutor.

Thank you for taking the time to read my manifesto.

Vote for Caitlin Raeburn