

CATRIONA DEE

HEAD PUPIL MANIFESTO



ABOUT ME...

Knox Academy has given me so much over the past five years. Not only have I gained life long skills, but the experiences I've had and the people that I have met have shaped me into the motivated, positive person that I am today. For that, I am very grateful for the work that Knox does; from the wide-range of extracurricular activities to the academic support & encouragement, it is truly outstanding. This is why, if I am elected as your head pupil, I want to make sure that Knox Academy reaches its full potential and that it continues to be a positive and a safe place for all. Throughout my years being involved with multiple extra-curricular activities, I have been taught to effectively work and communicate within a team, qualities which I believe are essential when carrying out the role of head pupil. These activities have also developed me into a determined individual and one that always tries to follow through with tasks to the best of my capability. Finally, I believe that Knox has helped me become a very positive person and encouraged me to do my best and to include & make everyone happy, which is something I would strongly encourage as head pupil.

WHAT COULD I BRING TO THE ROLE?

If I became head pupil, I will not only do my best to improve the school but will strive for my policies to leave a legacy and make a real impact on Knox Academy. Having recently won the YPI project, I have managed to learn key communication and organisational skills and developed my presentation skills, which are both essential for the role of head pupil. These skills would help me not only to effectively put across the views of the pupils, but would also allow me to listen to the views and opinions of the pupils. Being the vice-captain of the hockey team has taught me key leadership skills which are vital to fulfil the role of head pupil. I learnt how to effectively lead a team as confidently and creatively as possible, as well as developing my ability to work under pressure. During my time volunteering and taking part in community clubs, I have worked with a wide range of ages varying from 4-80 years old. This has led to me having the ability to work with all ages, which is an essential skill for any head pupil, as this would allow a successful connection with the local community, which is one of the school values and a main part of the head pupil's role. I have also been part of the sports council for the majority of my time at Knox. This has led me to help coordinate important events such as the sports awards, teaching me key organisational skills which are essential to the role of head pupil.

#VOTEDEE

MY PROPOSALS...

More emphasis on Mental Health awareness including teacher/pupil support scheme

S3 leadership system emphasising the connection with younger years

Courtyard (social area) renovation including work with the local community, art mural and sensory garden

Strengthen connection with Meadowpark such as arranging a representative from their school, volunteering & involvement with inter-house competitions

Introduce a new 'textbook trade' system, ambition zone & volunteering hub in library

INCLUSIVE NOT EXCLUSIVE
making everyone feel welcome, positive and involved - across all sectors of the school.

More community based projects especially for SQA pupils to help prepare for examinations

MY PROPOSALS...

INCLUSIVE NOT EXCLUSIVE

This proposal would concentrate on making Knox Academy a place for everyone.

This would include close work with the LGBTQ+ group including helping the school work towards the silver award and getting as many people involved.

This would include assemblies with people talking about their experiences, rainbow weeks and posters etc. to help raise awareness and make everyone feel as included as possible!

I would also aim to strengthen our involvement with Meadowpark as I think the community aspect of our school values are very important and hugely beneficial for all those involved

MENTAL HEALTH

With this being a rising problem in our society with mental health problems affecting 1 in 10 young people, it is essential that we do our best to tackle these problems at Knox Academy.

My main proposal involving this would be a teacher/pupil support scheme, much like 'tea & talk'. This would involve teachers and senior pupils volunteering to be available for people to talk to. As head pupil, I would do my best to encourage pupils to use this service so they are NOT alone.

Furthermore, to break the stigma with talking to others, I would put the availability of the teachers up in the library so if anyone felt like they needed help, they could do this subtly as this is much easier for the majority of pupils. I would also like to emphasise that this service is to help our pupils feel happier and can be used even if you just need a chat or to share your problems.

MEADOWPARK CONNECTIONS

Not only will this help reinforce the INCLUSIVE NOT EXCLUSIVE policy, but it will also work closely with the volunteering hub. Having worked with Meadowpark and it's pupils numerous times in the past, I have personally seen how rewarding it can be, which was the inspiration behind this proposal. I would also aim to get them involved with the sensory garden development in the courtyard. This proposal would include getting Meadowpark pupils involved with school events such as inter-house competitions, renovation of the courtyard, etc. and would massively help the pupils of Meadowpark as well as the pupils of Knox Academy. I would aim to put signage (sign language posters) around the school to make it easier for Meadowpark pupils when they visit as well as developing Knox Academy's sign language communication skills thus improving the connection. I would also like to introduce autism awareness and make Haddington an autism-friendly place. This would include purple dress down-days, taking part in autism awareness month and assemblies/posters. Finally, I have arranged to have a Meadowpark head pupil which would allow closer connection and would be massively beneficial to both schools in allowing us to work in unison.

S3 LEADERSHIP

This leadership scheme would be aiming to increase the connection between the younger years, allowing junior pupils to have role models who are of similar age, thus making it easier to talk to and communicate with.

It would be utilised during study leave when senior pupils are no longer available and when 3rd years are the 'eldest' in the school, much like the 6th year prefect system.

This would also help enforce school values as the role requires you to be respectful toward teachers, your peers, and the school environment. It would also help develop leadership qualities such as confidence, initiative, problem-solving skills, etc. which will massively help as they move up the school.

COURTYARD RENOVATION

The social area courtyard has a lot of potential to be an excellent learning space for many pupils in the school as well as being a place to learn new skills and work with the community. Furthermore, time outdoors, fresh air and being exposed to sunlight is extremely beneficial to physical health, one of the many benefits of this project.

I would aim for this area to be a space for everyone as it would include many features. Firstly, I would like to create an outdoor learning space with the use of natural resources, this would be massively beneficial as it would enhance the learning of the pupils at our school. Secondly, an area of the courtyard would aim to become a sensory garden. This would help enforce the connection between Knox Academy and Meadowpark as well as being a relaxing and calming place for pupils.

I would be keen to involve support for learning pupils as they have previously worked on a sensory garden project. Thirdly, an art mural for all pupils to be involved with, would allow each pupil to either have a single slate or as a whole, we paint one large mural. This would help us to connect as a school and enforce all of our school values, especially the community. Finally, I would like to improve the garden in general such as having planting beds. We would aim to work closely with community organisations such as Blooming Haddington as well as providing activities for pupils who struggle to concentrate in class. I'd also aim to involve the eco-committee and get some environmentally friendly waste disposal systems.

COMMUNITY PROJECTS

Having personally worked on multiple projects with the community, I know how rewarding it can be. Which is why as head pupil I would aspire to encourage the community connection. A project that would be beneficial to pupils would be encouraging the community to come to SQA showcases. This would include music performances, drama performances, hospitality cafes and art galleries. Not only would this help our pupils in improving their performance skills, but the community of Haddington would love to come and see the young people of their town perform. With many pupils performing for the first time to examiners in the final exam, this would massively help their performance, grades and nerves.

LIBRARY IMPROVEMENTS TEXTBOOK TRADE, VOLUNTEERING HUB & AMBITION ZONE

Volunteering Hub

This aims to give senior pupils more volunteering opportunities. This will help pupils develop their CV/personal statement as well as being highly rewarding. This scheme will involve contacting local organisations and creating a 'sign up board' with contact details and information. As well as making volunteering more accessible, it will also aim to encourage pupils to do volunteering.

Ambition Zone

Much like the volunteering hub, this will aim to inspire students and notify them about possible opportunities/events, such as open days, employment, apprenticeships, etc. as it is very easy to miss these important opportunities and events. This is extremely important as I believe that everyone should be able to achieve their full potential.

Textbook Trade

There will be a bookshelf/rack in the library where people can put their old textbooks and others can borrow them for the year. We would also encourage older pupils to trade in their old books before taking more to prevent shortages. This scheme would hope to make these resources accessible for everyone as each book can cost £10+ which can be very expensive, especially with most people doing 4-7 subjects and multiple books required for each subject.