

Kuba Stępniewski



Head Pupil Manifesto

2019 - 2020

Ambition Respect Community

Why am I running for Head Pupil?

Being a student of Knox Academy for five full years has allowed me to discover every sector of the school which aids us young people into becoming who we are. Throughout my first two years at Knox, I was quite shy, often lacking in social skills and struggling with teamwork activities in class. Yet, through the support of the individuals around me and the opportunities offered by Knox Academy, I feel that I have become a new person, being able to develop new skills every year. However, every school has strengths and weaknesses. As a great institution, we must highlight our weaknesses and work together to create stronger systems which will benefit everyone. I understand the values which Knox Academy proudly own, and I'm confident in portraying those values throughout my sixth year at Knox Academy. I recognise the positivity that Knox has spread throughout the generations and hope to contribute the same energy in my final year.

My qualities and skills.

Through my participation in many different groups across Knox Academy - through being a member of the Model UN group to Deputy House Captain for Traprain - I have been able to develop skills involving listening and communication, and strengthen my analytical abilities which allow me to consider both sides of discussions.

Volunteering for many different groups, charities and reaching the YPI final, I have learned the importance of considering everyone's concerns, allowing me to highlight issues at each stage of the year, while being able to refer back to past methods and solutions in order to come to an outcome best suited for the students of the school. I believe determination is a key part of how we succeed as a group. I wish to include determination as one of my personal values which I will aim to spread among the school.

One of the most important factors is leadership, one which I have been developing all my life. Beginning in junior sports clubs to leading a group in my Gold Duke Of Edinburgh experience. I have been able to feel comfortable in a position of leadership in the past, while allowing fellow group members to contribute in a fair and distributed manner. I guarantee to lead an effective team which remains hardworking and available throughout the full year.

I recognise the responsibility behind the Head Pupil position, and believe I possess the organisation and discipline to both prepare and run effective meetings with The Pupil Parliament and Leadership Team.

I believe I own both the expertise and friendliness to effectively stand as a leader and a gateway to resolving your issues.

My Policies:

1. To create fair representation in Pupil Parliament meetings by introducing a variety of school committees.
2. To provide new opportunities for individuals to gain information on coursing, subject choices and their future career.
3. To strengthen our bonds with charities in the local community while encouraging participation in volunteering.
4. To form a stronger link with local councils and authorities while encouraging students to stand up to their beliefs.
5. To develop the school's fight against Climate Change and strengthen Knox Academy's Eco-School status.

Expanded Policies:

1. As a member of the previous Pupil Parliament, I have discovered the effectiveness of the frequent meetings that take place. The range of committees have allowed many opinions to be shared across many issues. However, I feel as though the representation among pupils in the school can be improved.

I intend to implement greater opportunities for students to participate in these meetings through new school committees. I would work with the Leadership Team to include Faculty Committees where students can feed back to discussions by representing their specific faculty or subject (e.g. Arts, Sciences, Social Subjects). I aim to have new committees in full meetings by the beginning of September/October. This would be allow the Leadership team to gain information from a variety of sources throughout the year.

2. When transitioning from the Junior School to the Senior School, many individuals struggle with the overwhelming pressures of exams, work and of course, future plans. I recognise the difficulty in selecting a range of subjects which interest you and suit you for the future. Having gone through that experience myself, I found it very challenging to reach a decision on my future plans. I would like to aid the current junior pupils to feel more comfortable with their course choices, and reduce the amount of changes which occur in early stages of the year.

I intend to create a coursing event, ran by myself and other sixth year pupils. By selecting a number of senior students (all heading in different paths), junior pupils can take part in short conversations with senior students, which will

allow them to learn about the subjects they may take and the opportunities which go alongside them. This would act as a volunteering opportunity for seniors and a learning experience for juniors, allowing teachers to be given classes with students which are genuinely interested in the subject they pick at the beginning of the year.

3. Throughout my participation in charities across the local area, I have discovered the amount of great opportunities which exist for young people to help others. I believe our school has the chance to give back to our community in many great ways. One way is through volunteering. A way in which everyone can make themselves stand out is through participation in charities across our local areas.

Throughout my year in the leadership team, I would ensure to share light on the importance of volunteering for both the individual and the people being helped through the individuals actions. Personally, my interest in volunteering grew from the YPI project which is completed in S5. I believe that effective volunteering opportunities exist for everyone and are not restricted to the senior students. I would aim to create a volunteer week, which introduces new opportunities and locally based charities into the lives of the Knox Academy students - through assemblies and interactive stands. This would expand current events involving volunteer Friday and bring new volunteers to the community. In turn, creating stronger partnerships for the school and forming a good image of Knox Academy pupils.

4. Some may argue that 2018-2019 session contained disappointing decisions which were made by our local councils. Whether this included the Music Tuition Payments or the lack of enthusiasm and support behind the Youth Climate Change Strike. I believe that in today's world, the voice of young people is louder than ever, and we have the opportunity to work alongside local authorities to make decisions which benefit our education. I propose the introduction of a Council Report, where the Leadership would come together and create a report on issues we wish to bring to the council. This would allow local authorities to recognise our determination and ambition to fight the problems we may face.

Most importantly, I want to encourage the students of Knox Academy to feel comfortable when speaking up about issues which affect them. As Head Pupil, I would aim to create stronger relationships with both local councils and the community, allowing us students to have a bigger say in the decisions that will have an impact on us.

5. In recent years, the world has been highly alerted by the increasing issues involving climate change. We are reaching a time in history where our efforts

must double to make the necessary change. The students of Knox Academy represent the favorable future, one which fights the issues of Climate Change head on.

The hard work of both the Eco-Committee, Green Team and the students of Knox have allowed the youth to be seen as the generation fighting the crisis. I would aim to push the idea of an Eco-Friendly School even further, both engaging the community in the initiatives we begin, while creating activities on the importance of eco-friendly schools. Our local councils new Eco policy encourages and wishes to support those with a voice and ambition to fight environmental problems. This grants us the chance to gain momentum through our hard work and push our projects across schools in Scotland, setting an example for what other school's could become. I aim to work closely with the Eco-Committee in the upcoming months in order to highlight the large scale changes that we can make with council support.

One Final Message

Becoming Head Pupil has been a big goal of mine since I watched my first Hustings in S3. By aspiring to be a future Politics student, I have worked tremendously hard to develop skills which will both suit my future plans and a position in leadership. I believe that I have reached a stage where I am ready to take on the huge responsibility.

I want to give back to a school that has given so much to me. With your vote, I'd be able to complete that task. With the simplest of expressions, it would be an honour to become your future Head Pupil.