



# **FRIENDS ACADEMY**

Locust Valley, NY

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**HEAD OF SCHOOL**  
Start Date: July 1, 2023  
[friendsacademy.org](https://friendsacademy.org)



**Carney  
Sandoe**  
& ASSOCIATES



## Mission

Guided by our Quaker principles, Friends Academy educates our students to discover and develop the best of who they are and who they can become.

## Belief Statement

We achieve educational excellence by committing to the highest standards of learning and living.

Our diverse and welcoming community is strengthened by our Quaker values, which empower our students to inquire, reflect, and engage in their classrooms, in their neighborhoods, and in the world.

Because when we inspire students to learn and live with purpose, **they achieve greatness without sacrificing goodness.**

## OVERVIEW

Founded in 1876, Friends Academy is an independent, non-sectarian, Quaker college-preparatory school located on Long Island, serving students in Early Childhood through Grade 12. Combining academic rigor with Quaker values, an extraordinary educational program enables students to understand the importance of integrity, reflection, and community in achieving academic success.

Students are challenged to think analytically and independently and to strive for spiritual awareness, emotional well-being, and physical health. All are committed to understanding and honoring Quaker testimonies of integrity, simplicity, patience, moderation, peaceful resolution of conflict, and service within and beyond the school community.



## At a Glance

Founded: 1876

Total students: 705

Seniors in the class of 2021: 100

Students of color: 34%

Total full-time faculty: 84

Faculty of color: 19%

Faculty with advanced degrees: 86%

Student/teacher ratio: 8: 1

Annual Operating Budget: \$29M

Endowment: \$65M

Members of the Board of Trustees: 16



Friends Academy seeks a highly relational and community-minded leader as its next Head of School. Building on the successful six-year tenure of the current Head, the next leader will shepherd a strong senior administrative team, passionate faculty, and engaged student and parent community. The Head will assume responsibility at an exciting time, as Friends Academy completes its current strategic plan, moves into the public phase of a major capital campaign, and invests even more fully in its Quaker identity.

## THE SCHOOL

A Quaker school that serves students and families of all faiths and beliefs, Friends Academy is committed to the testimonies of simplicity, peace, integrity, community, equality, service, and stewardship, which have guided the school for nearly 150 years and are evident in every corner of the campus: in classrooms and offices, on fields and stages, in gymnasiums and art studios, and in the Meeting House, where each week the school community gathers for Meeting for Worship — silent, reflective, communal time.

Friends Academy has a talented and dedicated faculty and staff who provide students with a dynamic, flexible, and robust educational and co-curricular program. Through a range of academic pathways, students are challenged to push beyond the limits of their intellect, to broaden their perspectives, and to build skills and habits of mind that will serve them beyond the schoolhouse walls.

Friends Academy believes in the innate goodness of each member of the community. Every perspective and experience is valued. The Quaker adage, “Let your Life Speak,” spurs graduates to lead purposeful lives of integrity and service.



Throughout the journey of a Friends Academy education, students become active listeners and learners who are respectful, responsible, reflective, open-minded, and creative in their pursuit of excellence.

## ACADEMICS

As a student-centered Quaker school, Friends Academy supports students through the process of becoming more active questioners who are increasingly responsible for their learning and for their world. Across all grades, students are challenged to think analytically and independently and to strive for excellence, emotional well-being, physical health, and spiritual awareness.

Friends Academy is accredited by the New York State Association of Independent Schools (NYS AIS) and is a member of the National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS) and the Independent School Data Exchange (INDEX).

### Little Friends Daycare

Friends Academy offers both an Infant Care Program and a Pre-Nursery/Toddler Program. The infant and pre-nursery programs serve children from infancy to age 2+ in a warm, secure environment. Friends Academy offers developmentally appropriate activities designed to stimulate the interests and wonder of each child. Each activity is designed to be fun and engaging while having an educational value. In small groups, teachers focus on helping children interact and explore the sights, sounds, and textures around them. Children are encouraged to learn at their own pace in an environment in which they can feel secure.





## **Early Childhood**

Creating a culture of inquiry, engagement, and reflection begins in the youngest grades. Friends Academy's Reggio Emilia-inspired Early Childhood program supports students' curiosity, as educators embed the academic foundations for literacy, numeracy, and social and emotional learning in student-driven curricular themes. Quaker values undergird this work which establishes essential academic and social building blocks. In addition, an emergent curriculum leverages students' natural curiosity and interests, which actively engages them both academically and socially.

The Friends Academy Forest School program, the first of its kind in Nassau County, enhances the early grades program and offers a venue where students can explore nature as a classroom in a forest space, cultivating skills in creative problem-solving, collaboration, and conservation.

## **Lower School (K-4)**

The Lower School builds the foundation for academic excellence. This, combined with real-world problem-solving, is supported by Quaker values, empowering children to learn and live with purpose. The Lower School years are filled with joy, curiosity, exploration, and scholarship. A Kindergarten through Grade 4 curriculum lays the foundation for exponential growth in both academic and emotional domains. These fundamental years at Friends Academy ensure that children develop a solid sense of self, a passion for learning, and a growth mindset that prepares them to approach new opportunities and challenges.

## **Middle School (5-8)**

A combination of dynamic experiential learning, real-world collaboration, and Quaker-inspired pedagogy allows Middle School students to uncover their passions while preparing them for a successful experience in Upper School. Students are taught to consider not just the right answer, but multiple solutions through an Inquiry-Based model of expansive and comprehensive essential questions.



# College Matriculation

Friends Academy is proud of its students' record of admission to some of the finest colleges and universities in the United States and beyond. Graduates from the class of 2021 matriculated at the following institutions, among others:

American University  
Amherst College  
Barnard College  
Boston College  
Boston University  
Carnegie Mellon University  
Colgate University  
Cornell University  
Dartmouth College  
Duke University  
Fordham University  
George Washington University  
Georgetown University  
Harvard University  
The Julliard School  
Lehigh University  
Manhattan School of Music  
Morehouse College  
The New School  
New York University  
Pennsylvania State University  
Princeton University  
Savannah College of Art and Design  
Skidmore College  
Southern Methodist University  
Syracuse University  
Trinity College  
Tufts University  
Tulane University  
University of California, Santa Barbara  
University of Chicago  
University of Colorado, Boulder  
University of Southern California  
University of St. Andrews, Scotland  
Villanova University  
Wake Forest University  
Washington University in St. Louis  
Wesleyan University  
Williams College

[See the full list.](#)



This type of analytical thinking deepens students' ability to discern different perspectives and pathways as they solve real-world problems.

By the end of their Middle School career, students are confident public presenters, prolific writers, critical readers, and empathetic listeners. Diversity, equity, and inclusion are interwoven into Middle School programming and curricula as a foundational element of each school day. With solutions at their fingertips, students are encouraged to take what they learn in the classroom and consider how they can positively impact their world.

## Upper School (9-12)

Friends Academy graduates develop into thoughtful and dynamic leaders who possess the critical thinking, emotional intelligence, and resilience that prepare them to excel at college and lead lives of purpose, principle, and positivity. Through a process of ongoing inquiry and reflection, students explore diverse perspectives, approach challenges as opportunities, take risks, and explore their evolving questions and interests. A [robust curriculum](#) includes 20 AP classes and a number of post-AP electives.



Giving back is a core value of the school. All graduating seniors are required to complete an Independent Service Project, in which students spend several weeks at the end of the school year volunteering their time in an area of need that is personally meaningful and offers service to others.

Alumni consistently share how their Friends Academy education prepared them for a life of purpose – and the best evidence of their positive feelings about the school is the exceptionally large number of alums who have enrolled their own children at Friends Academy. The School's College Counseling office is committed to guiding students and their families on their journey to finding the school that is the best fit for them and their future, and counselors view the college application process as an opportunity for continued growth and learning. The Office's role is to provide direction so that seniors at the school can ultimately recognize their true calling, empowering them to make a personal and professional difference in the world in which they live.

### **Innovative Programming Strands**

Exciting new Innovative Programming Strands in medicine, financial literacy, and entrepreneurship develop in students the sensitivity and skills needed to become strong leaders, generous humanitarians, and true citizens of the world. These courses, which are taught in the Lower, Middle, and Upper Schools, offer project-based, interdisciplinary, and real-world opportunities for students to delve into research and experiential learning, developing their knowledge around an essential question. Students engage with professionals in their fields to solve authentic (not simulated) problems. A planned Innovation Center, for which Friends Academy expects to break ground in 2023, will provide state-of-the-art facilities for these innovative programming strands and Friends Academy's science and engineering-focused programs.





## THE ARTS

The Friends Academy arts program is a vehicle for students to discover their passions, find their voices, and explore their identities in programs built for success. The youngest music students begin by learning how to sing, listen, and use rhythm as they grow their abilities to engage in sophisticated large ensemble and solo performances in their Upper School years. When it comes to the visual arts, students are scaffolded through a curriculum that is designed to support idea development, art appreciation, and skill-based learning. Friends Academy also offers strong theatre and dance programs, where students simultaneously develop individual and ensemble work as they improve their physical skills and artistic expression. Through an excellent theater program, students are taught a range of acting techniques, with the goal of formulating their own methodology of character development; they also explore the technical side of theater to understand how the magic happens backstage.

Unique to Friends Academy is the Honors Arts Program, which gives students with a strong passion for art the opportunity to develop their abilities alongside other dedicated students. Beginning in Grade 9, students can formally apply to this program, where they design self-directed projects, develop a mentor relationship, and learn to talk about their challenges and triumphs within the creative process.





## ATHLETICS

Friends Academy competes as the only independent school in Section VIII of the Nassau County Public High School Athletic Association. In recent years, they have fielded championship teams in eight sports and have won numerous awards for good sportsmanship. The School's powerful foundation of Quaker values encourages student-athletes to push themselves to develop the key skills of resiliency and critical thinking. Athletic offerings include crew, cheerleading, cross country, field hockey, football, soccer, tennis, basketball, ice hockey, squash, track & field, golf, lacrosse, and softball. Seventy-one percent of Upper School students compete in interscholastic athletics and a number of graduates continue their journeys as varsity collegiate athletes.

## SCHOOL LIFE

Friends Academy knows important learning and development happen beyond the classroom. As a Quaker School, FA considers Meeting for Worship the "most important meeting of the week." Facilitated by Student/Faculty TASQUE (Teachers and Students for Quaker Understanding and Education), the Friends Academy community comes together weekly during Meeting for Worship as personal community members discover how to pay attention to their inner voice and, at times, absorb each other's poignant and powerful messages about life and learning.





The Friends Academy Service-Learning Program maintains partnerships with important organizations like Glen Cove Men's Shelter, Interreligious and Human Needs Council, and the Glen Cove Boys' and Girls' Club. Through these partnerships, Upper School students can understand the impacts certain systems have had on the well-being of their neighbors. Students participate in a wide range of committees and clubs, from Model UN and the Poetry Society to Student Faculty Board (student government) and the Sustainability Committee.

Guided by the current strategic plan, "Realizing the Promise Within," and underpinned by the Quaker values by which the School operates, Friends Academy is committed to cultivating a diverse, equitable, and inclusive educational environment for each member of the community, so that every student experiences a true sense of belonging and feels seen, heard, known, and valued. The school offers affinity groups and alliances for employees, parents, alumni, and students. All employees participate in annual anti-bias training, work that is supported by the Board of Trustees' Standing Committee on Diversity.

## CAMPUS

[The school is located on a magnificent 65-acre campus](#) in the Glen Cove-Locust Valley area of Long Island. Nearly all buildings have been either newly built or recently renovated, including an expanded Upper School and Middle School; a center for the arts; a three-story, free-standing library; modern science laboratories; four computer education centers; a modern and beautifully equipped 400-seat theater; art studios; a gymnasium; field house; and extensive athletic fields. The Jackson House serves as the Head of School residence, and on-campus housing is available for approximately 20 colleagues.





## LOCUST VALLEY, NY

Locust Valley is an unincorporated hamlet in the Town of Oyster Bay in Nassau County, on the North Shore of Long Island, 32 miles from New York City. With a population of about 3,400, Locust Valley is noted for its excellent nearby shopping, restaurants, and other amenities. Rush-hour trains travel daily between Locust Valley and Penn Station in Manhattan and take about an hour of travel time.

Previously known as Buckram for a coarse fabric produced at local mills, the name was changed in 1856 to Locust Valley, reflecting the numerous locust trees along the back roads. In the late 19th century, wealthy industrialists started building baronial weekend and summer mansions and estates.

Today, Locust Valley has remained a close-knit community filled with local businesses and restaurants within walking distance from one another, beautiful, historic homes and neighborhoods, and close proximity to some of the world's best beaches, green space, and all of the cultural, artistic, athletic, and other exciting offerings that nearby Manhattan and New York City have to offer.

## OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

Friends Academy's next Head of School will join the community at an exciting time. The School is engaged in implementing a five-year strategic plan and is moving from the quiet to a more public phase of a major capital campaign which will fund new initiatives that will add significant value to the student experience and elevate programming.

Chief among the many priorities, opportunities, and challenges facing the new Head are:

- Serving as the School's cultural leader, honoring and leveraging its Quaker values to nurture engagement and deep connections between and among students, employees, parents, departments, and divisions;



- Communicating with inspiration and clarity to a wide variety of stakeholders, serving as the “Face of the School” as well as its chief storyteller and greatest advocate;
- Guiding the current [Strategic Plan](#) to a successful conclusion;
- Leading a Capital Campaign, currently in its quiet phase, and becoming its strongest spokesperson and supporter;
- Hiring and retaining mission-aligned faculty and staff and supporting them and their colleagues with quality professional development within an environment that demonstrates their extraordinary value to the School;
- Identifying aspects of the academic program that require strengthening and applying the resources and personnel needed to achieve successful results;
- Continuing to enroll and retain diverse, mission-aligned students who enhance the quality of the student body by virtue of their academic excellence and overall engagement in all aspects of school life;
- Advancing the school’s commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, consistent with the School’s Quaker mission and testimonies;
- Evaluating the systems and structures that support student life, so that rules and expectations are widely understood and consistently enforced;
- Continuing to nurture the strong relationship and strategic alignment with the Board of Trustees.

## DESIRED QUALITIES AND QUALIFICATIONS

Expectations are high for the new leader of Friends Academy. The next Head of School will possess an impressive record as a teacher and school leader who has previously served in roles of considerable responsibility.

### Professional Qualifications

- Deep alignment with or eagerness to learn about and embrace Quaker beliefs and values as a vehicle to building connection, consensus, and academic excellence;





- Understanding of the compelling benefits and opportunities provided in an outstanding educational setting that serves children from Early Childhood through Grade 12;
- The ability to articulate vision and strategy as well as the tactical skills to manage the systems and processes necessary for effective implementation;
- Depth of experience in every aspect of school operations, including talent management and development; fundraising; strategic planning; and board relations;
- A deep personal and professional commitment to the principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion and the requisite skills to support a diverse student body and faculty;
- Experience working in partnership with a highly engaged parent community that has appropriately high expectations of the School;

### **Leadership Style**

- A highly collaborative leadership style built on approachability, responsiveness, and transparent communication;
- A demonstrated history of sensitive change management, moderated by deep respect for an organization's history and traditions;
- The confidence, courage, and humility to advocate for new ideas, invite disagreement, and welcome feedback.

### **Personal Qualities**

- The demonstrated capacity to find common ground among those with disparate views and the willingness to utilize in the School's Quaker values as a key vehicle to forge understanding;
- An unwavering commitment to high visibility and an eagerness to engage actively with students, colleagues, and parents;
- Excellent interpersonal skills and a highly refined EQ;
- The ability to speak and write with clarity and to inspire others in both individual and large group settings.



## TO APPLY

Interested and qualified should submit electronically the following materials as separate PDF documents:

- A cover letter that specifically focuses on this opportunity at Friends Academy and expresses their interest in this particular position; and
- A current résumé.

As the process moves forward, selected candidates may be asked to submit:

- Additional writing samples or responses to writing prompts; and
- A list of five professional references including name, relationship, phone number, and email address of each. References will not be contacted without the candidate's specific permission.

Candidates are invited to contact the consultants in confidence and to submit a résumé and cover letter to:

**Dr. Bruce L. Dennis**

Senior Consultant

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