Friends Academy 1876

Preparing Leaders *of Conscience*

UPPER SCHOOL **GRADES 9–12**

At Friends Academy, curiosity comes alive. Students don't just absorb knowledge—they stretch their thinking, challenge assumptions, and discover the power of empathy. We nurture bold, reflective learners who take ownership of their education and responsibility for the world around them.

In a community that values many perspectives, students learn to ask better questions, embrace complexity, and move beyond easy answers. They grow confident in thinking for themselves—while learning the strength of collaboration.

Our dynamic curriculum sparks both depth and discovery. With room for flexibility, challenge, and specialization, students uncover passions that shape their future. Along the way, they develop the habits that matter most: listening deeply, reflecting purposefully, and cultivating a strong sense of self in harmony with others.

Core Approaches

SEMINAR-BASED INQUIRY

In small classes, students become seekers and active questioners, taking ownership of their learning to explore diverse perspectives. They explore a spectrum of voices and texts, and learn to rethink their assumptions as they articulate and refine their own interpretations and critical conclusions.

REASONING AND RESEARCH

As sophisticated thinkers, Upper School students seek patterns and reason, conduct research, and collaborate with experts. Our most advanced learners contribute to the growth of knowledge by presenting their findings at conferences and symposia.

REAL-WORLD LEARNING

Hands-on experiences offer greater understanding and depth. Students learn by doing interdisciplinary work in and beyond our local community, enabling them to understand issues from the viewpoints of others.

Friends Facts

25+
AP and advanced courses

50+ STEM courses

45+ arts courses and experiences

92% faculty with advanced degrees

75+ clubs amplify student voices

25 Varsity and **10** Junior Varsity teams

4 year college counseling program

4,300+
alumni network

Academic Program

At Friends Academy, advanced study is about more than covering material—it's about cultivating curiosity, independence, and purpose. Learning begins in close relationships with expert teachers who guide students to ask bold questions, think critically across disciplines, and bring fresh ideas to life.

We believe in the light within every student. Our classrooms encourage active listening, reflection, collaboration, and innovation. Students learn to revise their own questions, test solutions, and demonstrate understanding through authentic performances and collaborative and independent projects. In this way, they grow not only as scholars, but also as ethical thinkers and purposeful leaders.

With an emphasis on agency, mentorship, voice, and choice, the Upper School curriculum invites students to explore deeply, challenge themselves meaningfully, and prepare with confidence for what lies ahead.

Advanced Course Offerings

Students in Grades 9–12 have access to a wide range of advanced courses that promote intellectual independence and deep inquiry. These courses go beyond preparing students for college—they spark curiosity, fuel passions, and encourage lifelong learning. Many students pursue college-level work, earning credit or advanced standing through AP courses, while others design independent research and projects that showcase their skills and imagination.

ADVANCED PLACEMENT COURSES

2-D Art and Design
African American Studies
Art History
Calculus AB
Calculus BC
Chemistry
Chinese Language and Culture
Computer Science A
Computer Science Principles
Drawing
English Language and Composition
English Literature and Composition
Environmental Science
European History
French Language and Culture
Latin
Macroeconomics
Microeconomics
Physics 1: Algebra-Based
Physics C (Electricity and Magnetism)
Physics C (Mechanics)
Psychology
Seminar
Spanish Language and Culture
Spanish Literature and Culture
Statistics
United States Government and Politics
United States History

Approach and Guidance

Learning here is as much about character as it is about academics. Our teachers see the promise in every student, encouraging them to wrestle with life's big questions, learn from challenges, and grow into their fullest potential. Surrounded by caring adults who believe in their highest capacities, students flourish as thinkers, doers, and people.

In the Upper School, this philosophy takes shape through a deep commitment to knowing each student as a whole person. Our Advisory program is at the heart of that promise: every student belongs to a small group led by a dedicated faculty advisor who serves as mentor, advocate, and trusted guide. Regular advisory meetings provide space for reflection, connection, and conversations that extend beyond academics—covering everything from time management and digital wellness to values, goal-setting, and social-emotional growth.

Students also benefit from a broad support team that includes grade-level deans, college counselors, learning specialists, and mental health professionals. Together, they ensure that guidance is personal, purposeful, and aligned with each student's strengths and aspirations.

Rooted in Quaker values of reflection, listening, and equity, our approach to teaching and learning empowers students to think independently, act with empathy, and discover their voices. By cultivating intellectual curiosity and personal character, Friends Academy helps young people develop the habits of mind and heart that allow them to thrive—in school, in college, and in life.

Senior Capstone Service Projects

Friends Academy's senior capstones reflect our commitment to inquiry, creativity, and community engagement. Working with faculty mentors, students design research or creative projects that often include service with local agencies or nonprofits.

The process blends academic rigor with self-direction and resilience. Students identify needs, conduct original work, and engage deeply with their communities—listening actively and building meaningful connections. Many projects embody stewardship and service, from environmental initiatives to mentoring younger students. These experiences serve as both academic milestones and rites of passage, empowering seniors to graduate as reflective, confident, and socially responsible leaders.

Arts

Upper School students thrive in an exceptionally well-rounded arts environment, with access to extensive offerings in visual arts, music, theater, and dance. The Helen A. Dolan Center features a professional-grade 350-seat theater and dedicated studio spaces—including a darkroom and digital media lab—supporting courses in ceramics, photography, digital design, instrumental and vocal music, acting, playwriting, and modern to aerial dance. Students engage through multiple ensemble opportunities—such as orchestra, wind ensemble, chamber choir, and jazz band—and participate annually in four major theater productions. The arts curriculum emphasizes creativity, collaboration, and technical skill under the guidance of experienced faculty.

Beyond classes and performances, Friends Academy enriches student experiences through a vibrant cultural arts program that brings professional artists and guest performances to campus—from dance companies like Alvin Ailey and Born Dancing, to musicians like Black Violin, to esteemed authors and visual artists. Participation in events like NYSSMA, All-County, and cultural showcases deepen learners' artistic growth and confidence while fostering empathy, critical inquiry, and community engagement. Whether creating in the studio, performing onstage, or reflecting in workshop sessions, students are encouraged to explore identity, social awareness, and global perspectives rooted in the school's Quaker values of integrity, community, and creative expression.

Athletics

Upper School athletics at Friends Academy are rooted in Quaker principles, prioritizing integrity, resilience, and community alongside competitive success. The school competes in Section VIII of the Nassau County Public High School Athletic Association and, despite being the only independent school in the league, regularly fields championship teams across eight different sports—highlighting the program's exceptional performance and sportsmanship. In recent years, our athletes have been recruited by Yale, Brown, Williams, Colby, Clemson, Columbia, William & Mary, West Virginia, Dartmouth and Boston College (to name only a few). With 84% of Upper School students participating in at least one sport, FA offers significant opportunities for students to develop teamwork, time management, and leadership skills on and off the field.

The athletic program benefits from state-of-the-art facilities, including a turf field, tennis courts, outdoor track, and numerous practice fields—all set within the school's scenic 65-acre campus. From traditional team sports such as soccer, basketball, lacrosse, field hockey, and track & field, to offerings like squash, crew, ice hockey, and tennis, students have diverse options across all seasons. Coaches emphasize Quaker values of respect, humility, and compassion, transforming athletics into a space for personal growth, camaraderie, and lifelong wellness.

FALL

Coed Fall Crew
Varsity Cheerleading
Coed Cross Country
Varsity Field Hockey
JV Field Hockey
Varsity Football
JV Football
Boys Varsity Soccer
Boys JV Soccer
Girls Varsity Soccer
Girls Varsity Tennis
Girls JV Tennis
Girls Varsity Volleyball

WINTER

Boys Varsity Basketball
Boys JV Basketball
Girls Varsity Basketball
Girls JV Basketball
Boys Varsity Ice Hockey
Girls Varsity Ice Hockey
Coed Varsity Squash
Boys Winter Track
Girls Winter Track

SPRING

Boys Varsity Baseball
Coed Spring Crew
Boys Varsity Golf
Girls Varsity Golf
Boys Varsity Lacrosse
Boys JV Lacrosse
Girls Varsity Lacrosse
Girls JV Lacrosse
Girls Varsity Softball
Boys Varsity Tennis
Boys JV Tennis
Boys Track & Field
Girls Track & Field

Quaker Education & Leadership

A Quaker school emphasizes the significance and power of silence and reflection. In the stillness of silence, individuals learn to look inward and share outward in search of the truth. Upper School students at Friends Academy engage deeply with Quaker education through regular observances and structured opportunities for reflection and action. A central component of this experience is the weekly Meeting for Worship, where the entire Upper School gathers in silence to reflect, listen, and, when moved, share messages. This practice develops inner stillness, authentic voice, and a sense of communal responsibility. Over time, this regular experience builds crucial skills—active listening, synthesis of thought, public speaking, civil discourse, and empathy—that students take back into the classroom and to college. Additionally, the Quaker testimonies—Simplicity, Peace, Integrity, Community, Equality/Equity, Stewardship, and Service (SPICES)—are woven into academic classes, advisory programs, and the broader culture of the school. Students are encouraged to reflect on how these values shape their daily decisions and how they show up in their relationships, scholarship, and actions.

A student- and faculty-led group helps guide the spiritual and ethical life of the community, facilitating Meeting for Worship, leading discussions on Quaker values, and organizing service projects and Peace Week.

Regular reflection leads to deeper learning.

Global Experiences

Immersive international trips deepen global understanding while reflecting Quaker values. These trips are carefully structured around inquiry, reflection, and community impact—students prepare through orientation sessions, maintain reflective journals throughout, and debrief upon return to process their learning and connect it back to Friends' values. By stepping beyond the classroom, these trips foster not only academic growth but also global citizenship, cross-cultural empathy, and purposeful leadership. Recent offerings include southern Spain and China, offering a blend of language immersion and cultural exploration, Iceland and the Galapagos Islands.

Reflections Course

Senior Reflections is a thought-provoking, semester-long, required course for all seniors. Meeting weekly in an intimate circle, students explore essential themes like wisdom, simplicity, love, and joy through a rich curriculum featuring poignant quotes, poetry, music, film, and philosophical texts—all infused with Quaker testimonies. The course culminates in the "What Canst Thou Say" capstone project, in which each student attends an external Quaker meeting, interviews a seasoned member, and reflects on the differences and resonances with FA's own Meeting. Through this immersive experience, seniors deepen their understanding of the Quaker ethos and connect moral, spiritual, and emotional growth in a way that authentically mirrors Friends Academy's mission and community values.

Student Life and Leadership

Upper School students tap into a vibrant and diverse extracurricular landscape, enriched by a broad array of clubs and committees. Many are rooted in service, others cover interests from eco-awareness to media production and cultural exploration. These groups encourage collaboration, creativity, leadership, and real-world impact across the school community.

Student groups at Friends Academy offer identity-based spaces, peer support, and global engagement. These groups foster understanding, empathy, and social action, allowing students to exercise leadership, advocate for equity, and broaden their worldviews. Guided by Quaker values, both clubs and affinity groups help form a strong community where student voices lead, differences are celebrated, and purposeful engagement drives personal and collective growth.

SELECTED STUDENT GROUPS

Diversity Committee

Inkwell

Natural Helpers

Student Faculty Board

Sustainability

TASQUE (Teachers and Students for Quaker Understanding and Education)

WATCH (We Are the Community Helpers)

College Counseling

Our College Counseling program is more than a service—it's a partnership. With expert guidance from Director Edward Dugger and his team, students receive personalized support throughout their Upper School years—starting early with "Pathways to Purpose" and other college workshops and continuing through individual meetings, application planning, essay coaching, and post-decision transition prep.

Our mission is to demystify the evolving admissions process and align students with colleges that match their academic passions, personal values, and future goals. Emphasizing holistic success over test scores alone, we empower students to explore their strengths, voice their values, and step forward confidently in the college search journey.

Highlights include:

- **Pathways to Purpose** seminars on navigating the application landscape, with advice from admissions professionals and the College Office.
- **Small-group workshops & peer panels** featuring alumni who share candid college insights.
- **One-on-one advising** helping each student to craft a balanced, strategic college list—testing range, fit, finances, and campus culture.
- **Essays, resumes, supplements & interviews:** Counselors provide extensive feedback and mock interviews.
- **Transition planning:** Seniors receive support for academic readiness and well-being as they prepare for college life.

20 COLLEGES OUR GRADUATES CHOOSE

This list reflects the most frequent destinations among recent FA Upper School graduates (class years 2022–2024, in alphabetical order).

Barnard College
Bentley University
Boston College
Boston University
Bowdoin College
Brown University
Carnegie Mellon University
Colby College
Colgate University
Cornell University
Dartmouth College
Duke University
Emory University
Georgetown University
New York University
Northeastern University
University of Michigan–Ann Arbor
University of Pennsylvania
University of Richmond
Williams College

LET'S CONNECT

We invite you to walk our grounds, talk with our community, and discover the kind of education that engages heart, mind, and spirit.

Friends Academy

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