



Escuela de los Amigos de Monteverde / Monteverde Friends School
Monteverde 5655, Puntarenas, Costa Rica
Telefax: (506) 2645-5302/5530
www.mfschool.org

Dear Prospective Monteverde Friends School Parents,

We appreciate your interest in our school. This is the application packet for new “out-of-zone” and international students.

On the first six pages of the application packet, you will find information regarding our vision, mission, and philosophy, expectations of students and parents, and monthly tuition rates, which you may keep for your records.

The remaining pages, which should be filled out and returned to Monteverde Friends School, will enable us to consider your child as a student at our school. WE have rolling admissions which means, when a space becomes available, in any given class, all completed applications will be reviewed according to our total admissions criteria.

Sincerely,

Liza Ewen
Head of School
lewen@mfschool.org
(506)2645-5530 (School)

Monteverde Friends School

MFS Vision and Mission

Surrounded by nature, supported by love, we work and grow in community that our lives may contribute to a more just, peace-filled and hopeful world.

Under the care of the Monteverde Friends Meeting, the school primarily serves local communities by educating children of families who value a Quaker education. Our small rural bilingual school welcomes diversity. We educate the whole person, nurturing each student's spiritual, intellectual, physical and creative potential. We endeavor to transform the lives of young people, that they may seek truth with curiosity and awe, and care for and honor all people and the earth.

MFS Philosophy Statement

Grounded in the values of integrity, truth, community, and peace, the Monteverde Friends School provides a challenging academic environment in an atmosphere of love and respect for our students, staff, and community. The school strives to lay a foundation of solid intellect, the pursuit of truth, and the values necessary to contribute to a peaceful and just society.

About Us

Nestled high in the cloud forest environment of Costa Rica, the Monteverde Friends School (MFS) was founded in 1951 by Quaker families who left the United States in search of a non-militaristic society. Due to its strong ethics, curriculum, and dedication of the community, the school has successfully grown to its present size of 120 students who represent Quaker, Costa Rican, and international communities. The School has evolved and thrived in this multicultural environment, rich in biodiversity for over 60 years.

Our school, under the care of the Monteverde Friends Meeting¹ and accredited by the Costa Rican Ministry of Education, provides rigorous academic instruction for students in pre-kinder through 12th grade. The MFS curriculum addresses a well-rounded education, preparing students for continuing education or their chosen vocations. Students are admitted regardless of race, creed², socio-economic status, or sexual orientation. Once a student has been accepted, applications for financial assistance are reviewed. In case of demonstrated need, we offer assistance within the ability of the school. The school exists to educate children of members of the Monteverde Friends Meeting and other local families who value Quaker education. We also appreciate the richness of perspectives international students bring.

The school's ability to integrate members of the community and staff with our student population creates a unique environment where parents, teachers, students, and community members of all generations work and learn together. By tapping into the broad knowledge base of our diverse community, we are able to provide educational, creative, and real world experiences that enrich our students' lives.

The physical location of the school enhances the education of our students through the incorporation of the bio-diverse tropical environment into our studies. The school promotes an appreciation of nature and the wise use of resources. Access to many protected areas and to people doing scientific research creates a strong environmental understanding and ethic.

¹ "Under the care of the Monteverde Friends Meeting" means the school is subject to the guidance offered by the Monteverde Friends Meeting. The Meeting's identity and philosophy is outlined in its governing document, *Discipline of Monteverde Monthly Meeting of Friends*. The Meeting approves the mission and philosophy of the school, and names the members of the School Committee. The School Committee acts as the governing body of the school and reports to the Meeting, which is legally responsible for the property and activities of the school.

² Admissions criteria include preference for members of the Monteverde Friends Meeting and other Quakers.

We are an English-predominant bilingual school. Two-thirds of the curriculum is taught in English and one third in Spanish. Students learn from each other, and from their teachers and other adults in the school, in authentic interactions in the two languages. Students who are not Spanish-dominant begins with Spanish as a Second Language before entering the full immersion Spanish program. English as a Second Language is required for non-English speakers who enter at first or second grade. Students admitted to the school after second grade must be appropriately proficient in English. The school strives for its graduates to be fully bilingual, bi-literate, and prepared to enter systems of higher education or pursue vocational interests in Costa Rica and abroad.

Our small multi-grade classes provide an excellent opportunity to accommodate a range of learning styles. Teachers employ a variety of teaching methodologies to address these diverse learning styles and allow individual students to strive toward their potential. Teachers promote sharing, and creative and cooperative learning, and the pursuit of independent learning goals. Students are encouraged to develop critical thinking skills that will allow them to identify problems and create strategies to find solutions.

Our teachers are key to the vibrant life of our school. These dedicated professionals, from Costa Rica and beyond, bring their knowledge and enthusiasm to our school community. Drawn by their appreciation of the values and academic excellence of our school, they share with the students their passion for learning and commitment to the search for truth. The school seeks and hires employees regardless of race, creed, socio-economic status, or sexual orientation.³

Education at MFS is holistic, reflecting the values of the Quaker community. In addition to our academic pursuits, we search for the spiritual meaning in day-to-day life. We encourage reflection, questioning, and appreciation for the life of the Spirit in our daily interactions and during our Wednesday Meeting for Worship, which all students and teachers attend. Students, teachers, staff, and their families are also invited to participate in the Sunday Quaker silent Meeting for Worship, if they so choose, further strengthening our ties to the community in which we live and work.

Education at Monteverde Friends School

We believe that seeking truth and pursuing a fuller understanding of the world in which we live is a lifelong process. We endeavor to give students the practical and academic foundation they will need to continue to learn and grow. We cultivate open minds, critical thinking, and curiosity, seeking to make inquiry and involvement a way of life. Our commitment to truth encompasses deep listening, honest intellectual investigation, and waiting patiently for the guidance of the Spirit. We hope to heighten awareness and an active sense of awe and wonder.

Students learn about themselves and explore their own roles in the world. They learn to care for others and for themselves as a foundation for healthy engagement with the challenges and gifts of life.

Students come to understand how their personal choices can produce change in a larger, interdependent world. As they grapple with ethical issues, solve real problems, and actively serve their neighbors, they discover how to build and extend a sense of community amongst themselves and others. They also learn to participate responsibly in the larger community and in the world at large. Within the school as well as in the larger community, we seek to live in ways that eliminate the causes of war, injustice, and violence. Learning to resolve conflicts in just and creative ways that promote an understanding of the needs of others is standard practice at the Monteverde Friends School.

³ Hiring criteria include preference for members of the Monteverde Friends Meeting and other Quakers.

Handbooks: The school has a Student & Families Handbook, where you will find more information about the school vision, mission and philosophy, school standards and discipline, and learning evaluation standards. This handbook is available in both languages at the school web site: www.mfschool.org.

We are Drawn Together by a Common Commitment to Cherished Quaker Values

Love and respect: Listening deeply to the Divine Spirit in ourselves and others has great power to transform lives. In our quest to contribute to a more just, peace-filled, and hopeful world, we begin close to home, by trying to love our neighbors and ourselves.

Simplicity: We seek to focus our lives on that which sustains us, both physically and spiritually, avoiding excesses that may strain our balance.

Peace: Building alternatives to violence and war is a long held Quaker testimony. The founders of the Monteverde Quaker community, in their search for a non-militaristic society in which to make a new life, chose Costa Rica for the importance it placed on peace. They valued being part of a culture whose economic development was not dependent on waging or preparing for war. Within the school, we too seek to live in ways that eliminate the causes of war, injustice, and violence.

Community: We collectively aspire to build community with those around us wherever we may live, creating an environment where people of different ages and cultures unite together in worship, work, and play. Enabling our students to communicate effectively in both Spanish and English and to function respectfully in two cultures is one manifestation of this commitment. We encourage and facilitate useful service, in the greater Monteverde community as well as in our school environment. Students participate in bi-weekly Town Meetings, in which they address, as a group, issues that affect the school.

Equality: We wish to honor and respect that of God in everyone, striving against prejudice. Each child, woman, and man has the right to be heard, and we teach mutual appreciation and respect for all ages. As a consequence, students serve as full members of both the School Committee and a discipline committee.

Consensus: We believe that when we combine deep listening with spiritual guidance, we are better able to discern our right path. We aim to seek unity in our group decision-making at school, at meeting, and in the community at large. Insight and wisdom may come from persons of any age. Using a consensus approach to decision making builds our capacity to listen, to be flexible and creative in our thinking, and to support decisions once they are made.

Stewardship: The school promotes an appreciation of and connection to the natural world. By increasing our awareness of our interdependence with all life on earth, we strive to use water, land, and other resources mindfully and wisely. Our resolve is enhanced by the natural beauty and biodiversity that surrounds us. Classroom walks through the woods, gardening, recycling, and daily clean up chores are a few of the ways we instill stewardship.

Integrity: We believe in speaking truthfully, keeping our word, and striving to be a living testimony to the values we teach our students. We try to inspire individual responsibility by working to let our lives speak more than our words. Living our values asks of us the courage to meet challenges with discernment and love.

The Quaker Religion

Quakerism (officially known as the Religious Society of Friends) is a religion of Christian origin which was founded in England in the 17th century. The Quakers created a form of spontaneous, open worship which eliminated clergy and placed the focus on the direct religious experience and insight of each person. Each individual is believed to have the ability to interpret the Scriptures with the help of the Christ within, without a human priest or pastor. The Bible as written is not considered to be infallible by most Quakers. Direct messages, or leadings, from the Divine Spirit are also looked to for guidance.

Meeting for Worship

Every Wednesday at 9.00 a.m. the school participates in the regular mid-week worship of the Monteverde Monthly Meeting of Friends. Our worship has no minister or pre-determined program. It is based in silent group meditation. Each person uses the silence to “center” spiritually. The time can be used for prayer or reflection on one’s own life, or on more general concerns. The goal is to achieve direct communion with God. If, in the silence, a thought or a message comes to someone which they feel internally compelled to share with the group, they stand and speak. Anyone, child or adult, is welcome to share in this manner.

Anyone is welcome to attend our meetings for worship, on Sundays at 10:30 am or Wednesdays at 9:00 am. Translation is provided. We especially encourage parents who are unfamiliar with Quaker worship to attend, as we feel it will give you a more complete understanding of the school.

Student Code of Conduct

We the students of the Monteverde Friends School have decided upon the following conduct code for our school:

“All students attending the Monteverde Friends School are expected to respect themselves, respect others, respect the buildings and school grounds, and respect the practice of Wednesday Meeting. In addition, all students are expected to put forth their best effort toward learning.”

This code implies affirming other people’s worth, no put-downs of self or others, talking and listening without interrupting, respect for other people’s ideas, cooperative participation in all school activities, taking care of the school property and grounds, respecting the philosophy and role of the Meeting in the school, taking active responsibility for your learning, and behavior that makes a positive environment conducive to learning.

Parental Involvement and Responsibilities

Your tuition covers most of the school's costs, but not all, this is why it is important to help in other ways. In addition to reducing costs, the volunteer assistance of parents helps to promote the values of co-operation, service, and individual responsibility

(These responsibilities are waived for parents who are not resident in the Monteverde zone with their children.)

Each family should contribute to the school in the following ways:

- Participate in the Cleaning Day before classes begin in August.
- Serve as a "Family of the Month" once during the school year (washing rags, doing maintenance, preparing snacks for Parent-Teacher Meetings, etc.)
- Attend parent-teacher conferences in October and March.
- Be available to meet with school staff concerning your child as needed.
- Participate in one organizing committee for one of the three parent fundraising activities: Christmas Fair, Sports Day, and the Walkathon.
- Participate in each of the parent fundraising activities by preparing food or working on the day of the event or contributing financially (an amount yet to be determined).
- Attend Parent-Teacher Meetings. There are six or seven each school year.

We hope that you can also participate in some of the following ways:

- Participate in the Cleaning Day the last week of classes at the end of the school year.
- Serve on an administrative subcommittee, such as fundraising, finances, etc.
- Sponsor new teachers or new parents (inviting them to dinner, community events, etc.).
- Offer to serve as tutors, teaching assistants, or mini-course leaders.
- Do maintenance and repair work (mechanical, carpentry, electrical or plumbing), office work or translation.
- Help on field trips, service days, and special days (such as Children's Day, Independence Day, Culture Day, Abolition of the Army Day, etc.).

Fees and Tuition for 2021-2022 (new rates will come out in February 2021)

| | Local rates Must be resident for at least 12 months | Outside Zone For International Students and families resident less than 12 months |
|--|--|--|
| Application Fee | _____ | \$30.00 per family (One time) |
| Registration Fee | ¢per student | \$per student |
| Pre-Kinder- 3 days / week | ¢per month for 10 months | \$per semester |
| Kinder- 5 days / week | ¢per month for 10 months | \$per semester |
| Preparatory- 5 days / week | ¢per month for 10 months | \$per semester |
| Grades 1-6 | ¢per month for 10 months | \$per semester |
| Grades 7-12 | ¢ per month for 10 months | \$per semester |
| Spanish as a Second Language Grades 1-6 | ¢ per month for 10 months, in addition to tuition | \$per semester, in addition to tuition |
| Spanish as a Second Language Grades 1-6 local | | |
| Spanish as a Second Language Grades 7-12 | ¢per month for 10 months, in addition to tuition | \$per semester, in addition to regular tuition |
| Spanish as a Second Language Grades 7-12 local | | |
| Home Stay- Room and Board | _____ | \$per semester, in addition to regular tuition |
| Gap Year | | \$ |

Payment:

The registration fee is due within two weeks of an offer of admissions. Tuition is paid in 2 payments, one for each semester. First payment is due in July and the second payment is due in December. Late payments will incur 2% interest per month. If at the end of each quarter a family is not up to date with tuition payments, the school reserves the right to not admit their children for the following quarter. Punctual payment is important to maintain the school's cash flow.

**Monteverde Friends School / Escuela de los Amigos de Monteverde
Student Application 2019-2020**

Date of application: _____

Expected grade level: _____

Expected entry date: _____

Full name of child: _____

Birth date: _____ Gender: _____

Nationality: _____

Passport or Cédula No.: _____

- Please include a photocopy of the birth certificate, the passport, or the cédula.)
- You should provide a copy of your child's vaccination records. This is an official requirement.

| Father's information | Mother's Information |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Full name: | Full name: |
| Home phone: | Home phone: |
| Work phone: | Work Phone: |
| Cell phone: | Cell phone: |
| Email: | Email: |
| Address: | Address: |

Schools attended by applicant

2020-2021 _____

Previously (years: _____) _____

What are your reasons for registering your child at the Monteverde Friends School?

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)

Please describe anything we should know about your son/daughter? (Special needs, learning difficulties, neurological diagnosis, history which could affect learning, family situation, etc.)

Please indicate your child's level of ability in the following areas of English, Spanish and other languages, using these terms: Fluent, Proficient, Able, Low, None.

| | Listening | Speaking | Reading | Writing |
|-------------------|-----------|----------|---------|---------|
| English | | | | |
| Spanish | | | | |
| Other Language(s) | | | | |

What is your family's religious preference? How do you understand Quaker religious practice in relation to your own religion?

Have you read the mission statement of the school? Are you in agreement with the mission statement and can you support it? (**See page # 2**)

Have you discussed with your son or daughter the expectations of behavior, cooperation, academic effort, and attendance (including attending Meeting for Worship)? (**See page #2**) Do you anticipate any concern or challenge meeting these expectations?

Will you be able to meet the expectations for parent participation in the school? (**See page # 5**)

Please mark the most appropriate squares.

_____ We agree to fulfill the obligations described in the section “Parental Involvement and Responsibilities”.

_____ We agree to pay the registration fee within two weeks of an offer of admissions.

_____ We agree to pay full tuition.

_____ Our child will receive financial assistance from _____

They will pay a total of ¢ _____ per year.

We will pay ¢ _____, the remaining amount.

_____ We can provide financial assistance to another student for the amount of ¢ _____ per year.

Parent Name _____

Parent Signature _____ Date _____

Parent Name _____

Parent Signature _____ Date _____

Medical and Emergency Information and Authorization

Name of Student _____

| Father's information | Mother's Information |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Full name: | Full name: |
| Home phone: | Home phone: |
| Work phone: | Work Phone: |
| Cell phone: | Cell phone: |
| Email: | Email: |
| Address: | Address: |

If the school is unable to contact you, the parents, from whom can we request authorization to take your child to the clinic or hospital?

Telephone number(s) _____

Does your child have any health problems? _____

Does your child use medication on a regular basis? _____

If so what? _____

Does your child have allergies or allergic reactions to medication? _____

If so, to what medications?

In case of minor ailments: (Indicate your preferences)

_____ We want our child to receive acetaminophen or ibuprofen from the office when child has a headache or other minor pains. (In case of repeated ailments, please call us to discuss problem).

_____ In case our child has a headache or other minor pain we want the school to call us.

You should provide a copy of your child's vaccination records. This is an official requirement.

Authorization:

1. I authorize the Monteverde Friends School, to take pictures of my child (ren) for educational and promotional purposes of the institution.

YES

NO

2. We authorize the personnel at Monteverde Friends School to provide first aid or other medical assistance in case of an emergency and provide supervision for our child....., during school hours as well as during school activities.

Sign:

_____ Father or responsible adult

_____ Mother or responsible adult

Date: _____

For Secondary Students (Grades 7-12)

Please explain your reasons for wanting to study at the Monteverde Friends School.

What are your goals for the coming year?

The following is a statement of intent by Monteverde Friends School students as a guide for conduct.

We the students of the Monteverde Friends School have decided upon the following conduct code for our school:

“All students attending the Monteverde Friends School are expected to respect themselves, respect others, respect the buildings and school grounds, and respect the practice of Wednesday Meeting. In addition, all students are expected to put forth their best effort toward learning.”

This code implies the following behavior at Monteverde Friends School. It implies affirming other people’s worth, no put-downs of self or others, talking and listening without interrupting, respect for other people’s ideas, cooperative participation in all school activities, taking care of the school property and grounds, respecting the philosophy and role of the Meeting in the school, taking active responsibility for your learning, and behavior that makes a positive environment conducive to learning.

I agree to support the above code of conduct. I understand the behavior that is expected of me as a student at Monteverde Friends School and I will comply with the above behavioral expectations. I also understand that failure to comply may result in being asked to leave the school or non-acceptance of my application.

Student signature: _____

Date: _____

For kindergarten (3-5 year olds) and primary school students (grades 1-6), please attach the following documents to this application:

- A photocopy of your child's birth certificate, passport or cédula
- Transcripts and reports reflecting your child's last two years of study (as appropriate for the grade to which applying)
- Any relevant evaluations regarding your child's learning needs or other needs
- A recommendation letter from a former teacher. Or the teacher may call us directly at (506) 2645-5530 or email us lewen@mfschool.org

For secondary school students (grades 7-12), please attach the following documents to this application:

- A photocopy of your child's passport or cédula
- Transcripts and reports reflecting your child's last two years of study
- Any relevant evaluations regarding your child's learning needs or other needs
- Two letters of recommendation from former teachers. Or the teachers may call or email us directly at (506) 2645-5530 or email us at lewen@mfschool.org
- The final page of this document, filled out and signed by your child
- If your child is applying from a bilingual school, the following essays written by him or her: one two-page essay written in English and another in Spanish, on one of the following topics. If your child is not yet proficient in Spanish, then an essay in English on one of the following topics.
 - The book that has most profoundly affected you
 - The person you would most like to meet
 - The greatest problem facing youth today, and how you would like to resolve it
 - A topic that is compelling to you and that would tell us something about your experience and perspective
 - An essay that you turned in this school year

For unaccompanied international students and their parents

- Please read and complete the International Student Addendum on the following pages.
- Please complete the Student Housing Questionnaire

International Student Addendum to the Monteverde Friends School Application

Part I: For the student to complete

Tell about any other experiences you might have had away from home and what it was like for you (camp, travels, boarding school, etc.)

Please describe a plan that you and your family have discussed to deal with feelings of homesickness or disorientation you might feel in the first weeks of your time in Monteverde

The Monteverde Friends School runs on a very low budget so that it can stay within the means of the families who sent their children there. A lot of what we do we do with local human and natural resources. What do you think your reaction would be to a chemistry lab without much equipment or having to share a math book with another person? How about if your host family may have only ten or twenty books in total? Have you ever lived with less than what you needed? What do you think you could learn from this type of experience? What might be difficult for you?

Part II: For parents to complete

Has your child ever been away from home before? Was he or she homesick? How did you react?

Your child writes you a desperate letter in his or her first three weeks saying how unhappy he or she is. What do you imagine the series of steps you would take to help your child deal with his/her feelings?

What are your greatest hopes for your child during their experience at the MFS?

Acculturation Issues for Students Coming from Abroad

Please print out and keep for your reference

Living in another country is a huge change for a high school student (or anyone else). Know what some of the common reactions of visiting students and volunteers are before you set out

Positive reactions

- feeling proud to be independent and adventuresome
- pride in self for being on one's own
- appreciation of one's own family
- appreciating the generosity of one's new host family or host school
- feeling you can be a new person in a new school. You can shed old habits or traits you don't like.
- appreciating your opportunity to join a new community and make new friends in another part of the world
- learning or improving your second language
- experiencing the wildly different environments of the tropical cloud forest or the cold snows of the temperate forests
- finding commonalities between Quaker communities

Common negative reactions to being in a foreign culture

- homesickness
- helplessness
- mood swings
- dislike of or even anger about aspects of host culture
- feeling your school or home is superior to those in your host culture
- introversion, spending time alone with the door closed, declining invitations to go somewhere with host family or friends
- disorientation, feeling the loss of one's own identity
- wanting to call home a lot
- feeling stupid or inadequate because you can't express yourself in your second language as well as you'd like or you can't understand what you're hearing
- feeling squeamish or even endangered by a new ecosystem (spiders, scorpions, snakes...)
- different combinations of many of these

Positive steps you can take in your new setting

- know these feelings happen to just about everyone, even adults
- trust that by the end of your time you will be sad to leave and happy to have had the experience—and you'll be proud of yourself
- be willing to suspend judgments about the host culture for a while, until you are able to see beyond your initial impressions
- let people know how you feel whenever you can. They will not judge you for being unhappy and you will feel better sharing your thoughts.
- keep busy. Go for walks, practice your second language, help a younger child at home or at school. Organize a game or a walk or let someone else know this would be helpful.
- ask your host parents if you can bake cookies or a special meal for them
- try to accept invitations from family and friends
- spend time in a common room at your house, rather than lots of time alone in your own room
- keep a journal of questions and observations about your feelings and your ideas

- keep a dictionary of the new words you learn each day
- spend time hiking in the reserve, listening to biologists or guides, and keeping track of the many new species you see

Steps for parents

- write regularly
- ask teachers and homestay questions about your child's environment
- help your child remember he or she is on an adventure and that you are proud of them
- remind them that hard things get easier and give them hope that they'll be happy soon.
- consider coming to visit them close to the end of their time here
- read up on the community and country your child is visiting
- trust the natural process of acclimation and acculturation

For the Monteverde Friends School

- designate an advisor for each student as soon as he/she arrives at school. This should be someone who can check in weekly (daily at first) with the student and be the liaison between homestay family/dorm and school and student
- have an orientation for student and homestay families the first week
- have some extracurricular activities the first several weeks of school that students must attend

For homestay families

- plan excursions early on—don't wait till the first vacation
- consider that the use of television in your house might be something your homestay student may not feel accustomed to
- have your family do things together, especially at first, such as a trip to get milkshakes or a hike in the reserve
- encourage your homestay student to participate in family household chores from the beginning
- send a note or photo to the student's family when you can
- be in regular touch with the student's advisor at school