



AFFORDING A BRIXHAM MONTESSORI FRIENDS SCHOOL EDUCATION: THE TUITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FOR 2017-2018

Choosing to attend Brixham Montessori Friends School is an important financial, as well as philosophical decision, and one that requires making an investment in your child's future. We understand that for many families the decision to continue at Brixham through the elementary years is difficult as educational expenses increase and free tuition becomes available at local public schools. Consequently, the decision not to re-enroll often becomes a financial decision rather than a philosophical one. We would like to change that and help families stay at Brixham and experience the whole Montessori experience.

In 2016-2017, Brixham Montessori Friends School provided more than \$75,000 in tuition assistance to families which included tuition reduction for full-time staff and financial need based awards of varying amounts for eligible families. With careful financial planning by the Board of Directors and spirited fundraising efforts, we expect to steadily increase available tuition assistance funds in the future and hope that your decision to re-enroll is one based on philosophy rather than finances.

Should you decide to make this important investment and need tuition assistance to help cover the cost of tuition, please fill out the attached Brixham Montessori Friends School Tuition Assistance Application form and submit the Parents' Financial Statement (PFS) to the "School and Student Service for Financial Aid" (SSS) **by February 15, 2017**. Both the PFS and the Tuition Assistance Application form will assist our school in determining what families can realistically pay to attend Brixham Montessori Friends School. All information regarding tuition assistance applicants, including the names of the recipients, is held in confidence.

Tuition assistance awards are based on demonstrated financial need. The tuition assistance application process and awards are confidential.

How do I apply for tuition assistance for the 2017-2018 school year?

In early January, visit <http://sss.nais.org/Parents/Apply/Pages/default.aspx> to complete an online application. Please print a copy for yourself before you submit it electronically and make an additional copy to submit to the Office by February 15, 2017. Also, include a copy of your 2015 Federal Income Tax Return with your PFS copy for the Office and your Tuition Assistance Application (attached). If you are self-employed, please be sure to print out the Business/Farm Statement, and submit with your application.

Prospective families: Indicate your interest in applying for tuition assistance on the Brixham Montessori Friends School application for admission. Tuition assistance applications will be mailed automatically to families who have requested to receive tuition assistance information.

Current families: Must complete a new Tuition Assistance application each year and complete the online application by clicking on the website,

<http://sss.nais.org/Parents/Apply/Pages/default.aspx>.

You will be notified by March 15th if you've been awarded tuition assistance. If you accept this award, please submit a copy of your 2016 Federal Income Tax Return by April 15, 2017. If you have any questions, please contact Alica at 207-351-2700 or e-mail her at

alica@brixhammontessori.org.

Frequently Asked Questions about Tuition Assistance:

Will applying for tuition assistance affect my child's chances for admission? No. Your application for tuition assistance will not impact your child's chances for admission. The admissions decision is made prior to the review of the tuition assistance application by the Tuition Assistance Committee. When the demand for tuition assistance exceeds the available budget, some admitted students may be placed on a tuition assistance waiting list.

How are tuition assistance awards determined? Who can qualify for tuition assistance?

Brixham Montessori Friends School will use the formula determining financial need established by the School and Student Service for Financial Aid (SSS) as a guideline for determining a family's financial aid award. After parents submit their completed application, SSS will calculate how much a family can afford to spend on tuition and will send a copy of this report to the school. The family may also request a copy of the report. The SSS formula takes into account a family's income, assets and nondiscretionary expenses such as housing, food, clothing, transportation, insurance, and the number of children in tuition-charging schools.

All tuition assistance awards are dependent on not only the family qualifying for need-based financial aid, but also the availability of funds in the tuition assistance budget. In this sense, tuition assistance is a competitive process.

Does Brixham Montessori Friends School offer merit scholarships? No. All tuition assistance is need based.

Will our tuition assistance awards change from year to year? It depends. Tuition assistance awards are recalculated each year using up-to-date financial information. If there is little change in the financial circumstances, families can expect that awards will be renewed at a similar level. If there are significant changes in a family's circumstances, the award may be recalculated. Also, if the school's budget changes dramatically due to significant increases or decreases in operating expenses or if fund-raising efforts fall considerably short (or conversely, exceed expectations), then that may also impact on the school's ability to make awards.

What about cases of divorce, separation or single parent? Brixham Montessori Friends School considers the decision to seek a private school education as requiring the active support of both parents. This cannot be changed by the assertion that one parent disclaims the responsibility for educational expenses. The Tuition Assistance Committee will consider the income and assets of both parents in determining an award.

If either parent has remarried, the Committee will consider the income and assets of the stepparents, bearing in mind that stepparents may have responsibility for their own children as well. All families are expected to pay some tuition according to their means.

What if one or both parents are self-employed? Each self-employed parent must fill out the Business/Farm Statement, in addition to the Parent Financial Statement (PFS). This form can be downloaded by visiting the Forms and Publications section of the www.nais.org/financialaid/sss website.

Do I need to submit a copy of my income taxes in order to apply for tuition assistance? Yes, please submit a copy of your 1040 Federal Income Tax Return for 2015 to the Office, along with a copy of PFS and the tuition assistance application. You will also need to submit a copy of your 1040 Federal Income Tax Return for 2016 (due by April 15, 2017).

What if I am not satisfied with my tuition assistance award? If the family feels that the tuition assistance award is not sufficient to enable their child to attend Brixham Montessori Friends School, they may request that the award be reviewed by the Tuition Assistance Committee. Requests for review may be made by contacting the Office and providing additional supporting documentation of financial need. The Tuition Assistance Committee will review the application and the additional information and will make a recommendation. If the family remains dissatisfied with the tuition assistance award, they may appeal to the Board of Directors.

What if I miss the deadline? The deadline for submission of the tuition assistance application for the 2017-2018 school year is February 15, 2017. It is critical that families make every effort to meet this deadline. Families may still apply for tuition assistance after the deadline. However, tuition assistance awards can only be made if funds are available in the budget. Those families who meet the tuition assistance deadline will have priority for aid over the late applicants.