Choosing a school for a child who has a learning difference (LD) can be daunting. There are many aspects beyond a typical school search that families need to consider to find the school that will truly serve their child’s needs.

Delaware Valley Friends School has helped hundreds of families through this process. As a result, we have developed this resource guide with six critical factors all parents of children with learning challenges should include in their search process.
Accurate testing and a clear picture of your child's unique learning needs will help schools better evaluate potential students and help families narrow their options to schools that are best able to serve their children. DVFS requires full psychological testing which includes either a WISC-V or Woodcock-Johnson IV completed within 2 years of applying to our school. You can get this testing through your school district or from an independent practitioner.

**WHY IT MATTERS:**
Clarity about your child’s learning differences helps focus your school search and helps the school form the basis for your child’s instructional roadmap.

**NEED HELP FINDING TESTING RESOURCES?**
The Delaware Valley Friends School Admissions Office has worked with a number of reputable private educational testers over the years. Click here or go online to www.dvfs.org/LDIQ-testing for a list of testing resources.
Schools have different identities and specialize in serving different types of students. Is the school clear about the students and learning differences they do and do not serve? Does their student profile fit your child? Does the atmosphere of the school feel right for your child and your family?

WHY IT MATTERS:
The right social and academic environment is essential for successful learning.

SERVING MANY DIFFERENT LEARNING PROFILES
DV’s program suits many different kinds of learners. Our students typically live with one or more of the following:

- Specific Learning Disability
- Reading Disorder
- Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder
- Executive Functioning Disorder
- Disorder of Written Expression
- Mathematics Disorder
- Auditory Processing Disorder
- Expressive/Receptive Language Disorder
- Memory or Processing Speed Challenges
- Non-Verbal Learning Disability

Click here or go online to www.dvfs.org/school-profile
There are many different programs schools might use to address students’ learning differences. They differ in approach and the level of training required to certify teachers in their delivery. Are those approaches taught in one or two classes or consistently across the entire curriculum? Ask how many teachers are certified and how rigorous the certification process is. How much flexibility do teachers have to adapt their lessons to students’ changing needs and abilities? Find out which approaches schools use and if those programs will produce the best results for your child.

OUR PROGRAM

The DVFS Orton-Gillingham based Literacy Program is the only school-based program in the region accredited by both national leaders in LD education. This program was designed specifically for our population. Other schools may use more regimented or rote learning methods. Ours is underpinned by the latest research and empowers teachers to adjust their lessons to an individual student’s needs and pace, while actively engaging him or her in the process. Many of our Language Arts teachers are certified (a 2-year process), and content area teachers have also been trained, allowing consistent LD support across the curriculum. Our Executive Function Support Program has been developed in conjunction with national experts -- Sarah Ward MS, CCC-SLP and Sam Goldstein, Ph.D. DV has been recognized as an Apple Distinguished School for innovation and excellence with technology optimized to support students’ individual learning needs.

Click on the logos to learn more about the associations that accredit our program.
It’s difficult to get a true feel for a school’s culture without spending meaningful time in the building. Do the admissions officers seem knowledgeable about the school and about LD issues in general? Are you given access to faculty, students, and parents to ask questions? How does the school “feel” to you and your child? (We encourage you to bring him or her on at least one of your visits.)

**WHY IT MATTERS:**
This decision can be life-changing for your child, and your due diligence needs to include at least one face-to-face interaction with the students, faculty, and leadership of the school.

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**DVFS ADMISSIONS**

At Delaware Valley Friends, we make the effort to get to know our prospective students and families so that we can provide the best possible guidance. We encourage parents and students to attend Open Houses and schedule individual tours. We offer access to current students, faculty, administrators, parents and alumni. Our Admissions Officers know the LD educational landscape and have extensive experience guiding families through the process. They are personally committed to treating each prospective family with the utmost care and respect and insuring that each applicant receives thorough and thoughtful consideration.

See upcoming dates and register online to attend a Delaware Valley Friends Open House.
Different schools have different pricing models and fee structures. Some state a base tuition and have additional fees that may not be obvious on their websites. Others package tuition and fees together in one total price. It is important to know which model a school uses and to clarify fees up front so there are no surprises. More important than price is the value of your investment. What difference could the right school make in your child’s life? What new doors might be open to them? Be sure to consider the true cost of your decision.

Delaware Valley Friends School’s tuition is inclusive - technology, sports, activities, field trips, and all learning materials are bundled into tuition. The few exceptions are listed clearly on our website, and most are optional. Our graduates are resilient self-advocates who are well-prepared to take on the challenge of college and career. Alumni and their parents tell us that in addition to a solid academic foundation, the lasting value of a DVFS education is a deep understanding of how each student learns and the individualized tools and strategies that will help them succeed for the rest of their lives. See the back panel of this piece to read what some parents and students say about their DVFS experiences.
Where students go after graduation is an important indicator of a school’s success. Look at where students have been placed as well as how alumni have fared. Does the school have an expert college counselor with an established history of successful and diverse placements, as well as long-standing relationships with colleges and universities nationwide? Does the counselor also have experience working with students who learn differently, who often must include questions about student support services and academic accommodations as part of their college search process?

**WHY IT MATTERS:**
One important way to measure the lasting value of a school is in how well it has prepared graduates to succeed in college and in life.

Delaware Valley Friends School has a long and successful track record of preparing students with learning differences for success in college and beyond. Nearly all of our graduates enroll in college or university directly after DVFS, and some attend top art and culinary schools. Our Director of College Counseling is experienced in guiding students with learning differences through all aspects of the process. The most recent three classes of graduates were accepted into a total 168 different colleges, and a 98% college enrollment average over the past 10 years.

Click here or go online to [www.dvfs.org/MeetOurGrads](http://www.dvfs.org/MeetOurGrads)
I can't imagine what my life would have been like if I had not gone to Delaware Valley Friends School. I realized that it was unacceptable for me not to reach my potential. I am also grateful to my family for believing that I could succeed in the right environment. Every part of me knows that DVFS was what I needed to be successful.

Nicole, Class of 2005  
(BA, McDaniel College; MA, University of Pennsylvania)

At DVFS, Emily obtained the confidence to advocate for herself and succeed in whatever she endeavored. Now she is graduating with honors from Cornell and already has a good job in her field upon graduation. Invaluable.

Barry, DVFS Parent, Class of 2011

Self-advocacy is one of the biggest things I’ve learned at DV as well as understanding my strengths and how to work with my learning difference in ways that will benefit me in college and life.

Matt, Class of 2015  
(Johnson & Wales University)

At Delaware Valley Friends, Steven’s self-confidence grew exponentially! He also learned to know himself and his strengths and weaknesses and was a real advocate for himself. The school is life-changing for many children, and opens pathways for them that they may never otherwise have recognized.

Ellen, DVFS Parent, Class of 2006

Enrolling your child in the right independent school can be an enriching and life changing experience – a second home where your child will be nurtured and thrive. These six factors - based on the knowledge and insights we’ve gained from years of helping families find the right fit for their child - will help you become informed parent advocates in this process. Contact us to start your journey by getting to know more about Delaware Valley Friends School.

Delaware Valley Friends School  
UNLOCKING THE POWER TO LEARN

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The School shall not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national or ethnic origin, gender, sexual orientation, sexual identity, age, disability or marital status in the administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, athletic and other school administered programs, or in hiring, use of volunteers or board membership.