



Alumna

Hikaru Ito (Sandra)

Maruyama Friends Club
37th Graduating Class



With friends
in Lyon, France

Hello. My name is Hikaru Ito, a 37th graduating class Maruyama student.

There is probably no other kindergarten in all of Japan that is as fun and fulfilling as MeySen. My memories of MeySen Kindergarten and the Friends Club are so rich and colorful that they remain in my heart to this day. Roasting marshmallows on Friends Day, exchanging gifts at Christmas, and the teachers, who warmly greeted me with an energetic "Hi Sandra! How are you?" I love MeySen.

Upon graduating university, I joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. After working for two years in the Kasumigaseki, Tokyo branch, career-track employees are assigned to an embassy in a country designated at the time of their entry into the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. I am currently attending graduate school in France as part of my overseas training and will be assigned to a French-speaking Japanese embassy this summer.

I have lived in Thailand, the U.S., Switzerland, and France, and I have learned immeasurably from their different cultural traditions. For ex-

ample, in France, there is a culture called "Apéro," where they enjoy hours of conversation with family and friends over a glass of wine. I used to think that it was prudent to forgo this style of time and devote myself fully to study or work, but this French culture made me realize the importance of enjoying the "now."

As diplomats, we need to make full use of English and other foreign languages in our profession, and the English language skills we have developed at MeySen are a great advantage. The foundation of diplomacy is people-to-people relationships. The discipline of "Makoto," translated as honesty or sincerity, taught at MeySen, is a cornerstone that I will continue to cherish as I work to build relationships of trust that transcend language barriers.

I sincerely hope that all of you, the next generation, will enjoy your time at MeySen to the fullest and that it will play an active role in your respective futures.



Illustrator, Shin Masuda

Alumnus Shin Masuda (Guy, Maruyama Friends Club 17th Graduating Class) has been drawing illustrations for the school's printed materials, including the playground program. We interviewed him about how he became an illustrator and his work for MeySen.

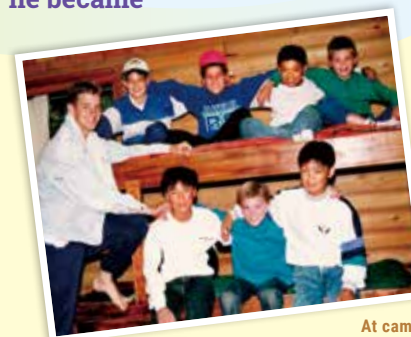
I am an illustrator in Sendai and am a former MeySen student, who attended kindergarten and Friends Club. Although I now call myself an illustrator, I was not very good at drawing as a child, so much so that my parents actually cried when they saw my poor drawings as a 7-year-old. It may sound surprising, but since I had never practiced drawing in the first place, for me it was natural to receive this type of response for something I had not worked at and was not good at. However, when I was in the 5th grade, my teacher praised my use of color, which made me happy and revived me. A child's motivation can be simple like this, and once my "switch"

was turned on, I found myself drawing more and more.

The more I drew, the more I enjoyed it and the better I got. I found myself on the path to becoming an illustrator.

It wasn't as easy as it sounds, but I enjoyed drawing, and for more than 35 years since then, I have continued to draw pictures with the same feeling as when I was a boy.

I draw illustrations for MeySen, remembering myself as a child. In my drawings, I am conscious of how children are naturally carefree and warm-hearted.



At camp
on the 7th American study trip
(upper row, second from the right)



MASUDASHIN



Mr. Masuda has also written many children's books and business books!



The book "The Most Fun in Japan! Summer Jumbo Mistake-Finding Quiz" published twice a year by Shinyusha.

Bible verse

Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

Colossians 3:13,14

聖書
せいしよ

Welcome to the NEW SCHOOL YEAR

Daniel Fanger, Principal



Our 59th year has begun. Thanks to the tremendous understanding and cooperation of the parents and families, we were able to have a successful school year last year. As always, we have received a great deal of cooperation and support from all of you, despite some major changes to shorten the working hours of our teachers as part of the reform of our workstyle. Thank you sincerely.

In addition, last school year was the first year that we welcomed 2-year-old children (the Toddler class) from the beginning of the school year and provided them with year-round care. Needless to say, the growth of the children in this age group was remarkable, and we were thrilled to see how much they achieved in just one year! I was personally so impressed with how far they had come! At the Maruyama campus, the number of Toddler classes has doubled to four this year, and the kindergarten is expected to become even more lively, with these additional students.



The Bible is the standard for everything

Since the opening of MeySen Academy, the Bible has been the foundation for everything we do. People have different values, and as times change, society's way of thinking changes rapidly. However, we believe that the truth of the Bible is eternal and unchanging, and that if we follow it faithfully, we will never go astray.

The basic policy of the school states, "We aim to develop sound character that seeks mercy and truth, honors God, and loves others". That sentence encapsulates the essence of the type of education we aim to provide. These are the most important qualities we want each and every child who attends MeySen to possess. The "mercy" and "truth" that I refer to is based on God's word (the Bible), not on human ideas or general social trends and customs. MeySen Academy sometimes must make difficult decisions, but we want to pray and seek God's wisdom in these decisions, and make them in light of the standards of truth, justice, and mercy written in the Bible.

The Creator is on our side

Here are some words from the Bible that have encouraged and strengthened me many times in my life...

I lift up my eyes to the mountains.

Where does my help come from?

My help comes from the Lord,

the Maker of heaven and earth.

He will not let your foot slip,

He who watches over you will not slumber.

The Lord will keep you from all harm,

He will watch over your life.

The Lord will watch over your coming and going both now and forevermore.

<Psalm 121:1-3, 7-8>

I memorized these words in my childhood, and when I became a working adult and was suffering so much that I could not even eat due to an event in my life that at the time felt like a raging storm, I remembered these words and read them again, and all of my dark feelings were blown away. At that time, I remembered thinking, "Yes, I believe in God, who created heaven and earth and controls everything in the universe. God knows everything, and there is not a single thing that happens without His permission, so I will trust and leave everything to God." I then prayed to God for a solution to the problem. Thinking back now, I can't even recall how the event played out, but I remember that as soon as I prayed to God, I felt an immediate calmness and was able to eat properly again.

I feel truly blessed with the environment I am in now, and I am so very thankful for that. I am blessed to be in daily contact with all of our precious students, to be able to teach them about God, to have support and understanding from their parents, and to have teachers and staff who share the same feelings and aspirations to serve these children.

Despite such a blessed environment, while we are on this earth, there are hardships and trials due to the curse of sin. Each time I am reminded of God's loving promises, including the words of this Psalm. It truly delights me to think

of that, and to know that no matter what I may have to endure in this world, I have the promise of heaven and eternal life. I sincerely hope that all of you can have such joy and peace.

The Greatest Treasure

Children are the greatest treasure, a precious gift from God. It is a privilege and a special blessing and joy for us, the teachers and staff of MeySen, to be able to have a relationship with these precious little ones. At the same time, it is an immense responsibility. To live up to the parents' expectations and trust, we will continue to strive for an even higher level of education, this new school year.

For the joyous future of these precious children given to us by God, we hope that the parents and the school staff will build a good relationship of trust and cooperation with each other. We look forward to working with you again this school year.



We received a lot of cooperation from our parents last year.
(Photo: Thanksgiving Day, with the class mothers who helped us make curry)



friends フレンズ
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Friends is the MeySen Academy newsletter and publishes the latest news on everything that is happening at MeySen Academy, from Kangaroo Club to High School and MeySen Alumni. You can read it on our website too.

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SPRING INTO A NEW YEAR WITH MEYSEN

Friends Club & Premier Elementary Key Points about Materials and Home Study

In the parent survey conducted at the end of last school year, we received many questions from Friends Club and Premier Elementary families about their English learning goals and how to effectively promote their REP study at home.

The GrapeSEED curriculum is structured so that students learn new vocabulary and expressions through step-by-step repetition from grade 1 through grade 6, rather than setting goals for each grade level, such as "mastering XXX in grade 1". For example, even if students forget what they have learned in one unit, the vocabulary and concepts are incorporated in a later unit, so they can continue to learn and improve their language skills.

In addition, we opened a new website in April that provides a one-stop site of useful information for REP, including information on the content of each unit of study and answers to frequently asked questions from parents.

*The URL of the site and other details will be provided separately to families of current students.

The REP site is
now available



Examples of Unit Study

Friends Club

1st Grade	Unit 9-12 (e.g. Unit 9) <ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Subject pronouns "I, you, he, she, we, they"▶ Expressions using "really, so, favorite"
2nd Grade	Unit 13-16 (e.g. Unit 13) <ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Possessive pronouns "his, her"▶ Expressions with "each, soon, as soon as"
3rd Grade	Unit 17-20 (e.g. Unit 17) <ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Expressions using "just right, could, should"
4th Grade	Unit 21-24 (e.g. Unit 21) <ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Onomatopoeic words "swish, splash, squish"▶ Present perfect tense "Have you ever seen...?" and conversation practice using "How are you doing?"
5th Grade	Unit 25-28 (e.g. Unit 26) <ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Expressions of "if, would, looks like" and commands
6th Grade	Unit 29-32 (e.g. Unit 29) <ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Understanding "stayed up, up to you, right away"▶ Expressions using "which" and base/ordinal numbers

Premier Elementary

G1	Unit 13-17 (e.g. Unit 15) <ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Comparative/superlative with adjectives▶ Expressing certainty with "I think" and "I don't think"
G2	Unit 18-22 (e.g. Unit 20) <ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Understand degree of probability using "might" and making suggestions using subject pronouns and "should"▶ Expressions using "which" and base/ordinal numbers
G3	Unit 23-27 (e.g. Unit 25) <ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Expressions using "It looks that way"▶ Expressions using "what, why, where, when, if, how"
G4	Unit 28-31 (e.g. Unit 30) <ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Expressions using "Have you heard...?"▶ Asking for clarification
G5	Unit 32-36 (e.g. Unit 35) <ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Expressing obligation▶ Expressing satisfaction/dissatisfaction
G6	Unit 37-40 (e.g. Unit 40) <ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Language specifically used on the phone▶ Express degree of possibility



Premier K5 Field Trip



Enjoy the world of tone-rich brass! - Music Concert held in January

This year's music concert was a "brass quintet concert." Brass instruments have a distinctive way of producing sound, as musicians need to vibrate their lips when they pass their breath through the mouthpieces.

The concert began with Rossini's "William Tell Overture," a spirited march that everyone knows, which immediately put the audience in a joyful mood.

The trumpet player, Joshin Urata, was an entertaining emcee, introducing the characteristics of each instrument. The horn, whose bell points backward when held in position, the trombone, which has a slide that expands and contracts, and the tuba, the largest of the instruments, which weighs 15 kg. When the tuba played the sound of an elephant's cry in a powerful bass tone, the audience responded with a chant of "encore!"

After three short pieces by the English composer Farnaby, that made use of each individual brass instrument, a rhapsody on "Godzilla's Theme" was performed in various moods, surprising the audience with the richness of the brass instrumental sound. The "Sound of Music Medley" drew the audience into the world of the movie with "My Favorite Things" and "Climb Ev'ry Mountain," followed by "Sanpo" from My Neighbor Totoro, to which everyone clapped their hands in delight. The finale was our very own "MeySen Kindergarten Song" (English version). It was a time to fully enjoy the charm of brass instruments.

Nensho Family Day



Friends Club 2nd grade Special Day Michinoku Park



Toddler Class Wakuwaku Day



Musicians (from left)
Joshin Urata, Trumpet and MC
Atsuki Nakano, Horn
Yuki Yamada, Tuba
Hayato Konno, Trombone
Naoki Inoue, Trumpet

Program

- 1 Rossini: William Tell Overture
- 2 Farnaby: Suite for Brass Quintet
- 3 Godzilla Theme Concerto-style Rhapsody for Orchestra
- 4 Rodgers: The Sound of Music Medley
- 5 Sanpo from My Neighbor Totoro
- 6 MeySen Kindergarten Song (English version)

MeySen Volunteer Activity Report Meeting

On February 26, we held a debrief meeting for the 2024 school year, inviting those who had volunteered at least 10 hours or 5 times in 2024. We are also looking forward to welcoming new parents who will join us in 2025!

Ms. Ayano Naqamoto

Mother of Soshi (Friends Club 5th grader) and
Michiya (Friends Club 2nd grader)

"I had fun again today!" When I participated in the MeySen volunteer program for the first time, I realized that my sons' daily lives at MeySen were supported by many people and many hours of work. Because MeySen has children of all ages attending the school, the teachers spend a great deal of time preparing materials and for events. MeySen volunteers have the wonderful opportunity to feel the teachers' thoughts and feelings firsthand, as they work together as one to support the children.

I also feel that meeting other parents from other grades is another appealing aspect of volunteering. During the COVID pandemic, I experienced a time when I could not interact with the other parents. Once again, I realize the importance of connection. I have also started volunteering at the elementary school my sons attend. The MeySen volunteer program was a great opportunity for me to broaden my horizons. I am happy to be able to be involved in my sons' educational activities, even if only a little. The volunteer work is diverse and I enjoy the variety of tasks each time. I love the time we spend working together, sharing our thoughts and thinking of the smiling faces of the children.

Last but not least, I would like to thank all the people at MeySen Academy who always give me warm encouragement, as well as the parents who always volunteer with a warm heart.



Ms. Denno Nozomi

Mother of Uika (Friends Club 1st grader) and
Touka (Nencho)

Thank you for the opportunity to volunteer with FitKids for the past two years. At first, I was hesitant because I thought that my involvement would affect my daughter and she would not be able to concentrate on exercising, but one of the mothers who had participated in the program encouraged me by saying, "You should do it because you can see how cute the children are!" I talked with my daughter about it, and we decided I should do it.

After volunteering, I'm so glad I did it! That's all I can say. I was able to see how my child interacted with friends and teachers at kindergarten, how she thought, how she acted, and the expressions on her face, all of which I would not normally be able to see. I was also amazed by the content of the FitKids program. I learned how to interact with my child, such as how to talk to her and what to help her improve, as well as the movements in play, that lead to other skills such as jumping rope, jumping jacks, and the horizontal bar. Looking back on the activities I helped with, it actually helped prepare me for the MeySen Day relay race. On the way home from FitKids, we would talk about how we were able to do these things! I was so happy to be able to talk with her about it. I was very happy to see not only my child but also all the children progressing and improving, and I was also very happy to hear from them when I see them outside of the FitKids class. Thank you very much for this precious opportunity. I will never forget the children's hard work and growth that I got to see with my own eyes.



"Community Gathering" was held

In January, we held a "Community Gathering" to show our appreciation for the companies that have generously donated to our community-integrated study abroad support project "A Way We Learn" as well as to other areas within MeySen that help further our English education at our school.

From the first donation in FY 2018 and now through FY 2024, 38 students have completed the long-term study abroad course with the support of these supporting companies, and this summer in FY 2025, three more students will leave for the United States.

This gathering is a valuable opportunity for our high school students to interact with business professionals from companies that help to support and develop the local and Japanese economy. We sincerely appreciate their support of MeySen Academy and we will continue to work hard to ensure our school is one of the starting points for intergenerational community exchanges moving forward.



Many people attended the event and plaques of appreciation were presented to those who sponsored our students

Returning students gave speeches to thank the sponsoring companies



Marie, Tomoka Miyashita

Marcia, Mako Kakudo