

Cherry Blossom Outdoor Kindergarten Home Study Program Overview

**Please read this overview in its entirety if you are considering enrolling your child in The Cherry Blossom Outdoor Kindergarten Home Study program. It is important to understand that the parent plays a role in the implementation of the curriculum on the days that the children do not attend the outdoor portion of the program. Documentation is collected monthly as well as an expectation of a monthly parent meeting/check in for support. All materials are provided for the home school portion of the program.*

“Those who contemplate the beauty of the earth find reserves of strength that will endure as long as life lasts.” -Rachel Carson (quote from Last Child in the Woods by Richard Louv)

The kindergarten curriculum inspired by Waldorf education is age appropriate and based on the first developmental phase of childhood, birth to seven years. During this stage, the child is building his/her body. The curriculum in the kindergarten, as well as the environment, is created to facilitate this through opportunities to exercise small and large motor skills, plenty of time for creative cooperative play, storytelling, singing, and a strong rhythm.

The Outdoor Kindergarten Home Study program offers three days a week where the children may experience a typical kindergarten day in an outdoor setting with their teacher. This enables those children, who are also educated in the home, to engage in a social school experience away from their parents. Families are provided materials and a curriculum inspired by Waldorf education to implement in the home on the days that the children are not present at school. They also participate in parent evenings once a month with the teacher and meet regularly one on one to discuss their child's progress and individual needs.

The kindergarten morning is consciously structured so that the child may live in a harmonious breathing rhythm, coming to know that life has beauty, order, and deep wisdom. The day begins with a morning circle of song and verse with movement where both the physical development of small and large muscle control and coordination, as well as speech development with articulation are encouraged. Families are encouraged to stay and take part in the morning circle prior to saying good-bye to their kindergartener.

After circle, the children build stamina and develop their large motor skills by walking to either the river or the park in most weather. Balance, coordination, visual and spatial awareness are developed as they maneuver through puddles, over rocks, across a creek, all the while, experiencing mother nature's unpredictability. Families will be asked to send their children with raingear and clothing appropriate for the weather.

After we arrive at our destination, the children are given plenty of time for creative play. Outside play offers many opportunities for development of large motor skills – running,

jumping, sliding, building, digging, and climbing. These activities offer opportunities to problem solve, use materials constructively, take part in cooperative play, and are beneficial to becoming life-long learners. During free play the children may also participate in a particular activity; jump rope, games/activities that develop fine motor skills (finger knitting, woodworking, weaving, and sewing), and/or a seasonal craft. These activities enhance the ability to use materials constructively, follow directions, and complete a task. As their teacher, I feel the responsibility to create an environment that is worthy of imitation; therefore I model for them activities and communications that benefit the development of their physical organism.

Snack time is a social activity. The children practice their social skills and table manners while enjoying a nutritious snack provided by the teacher/class. They learn reverence by speaking a blessing and expressing gratitude to those that helped prepare the snack that day. They also help set the table, chop the fruit or vegetable, and participate in the clean up.

As soon as we conclude our snack and clean up, it is time for a fairy tale. Fairy tales benefit children in multiple ways. Clearly they help children to increase vocabulary, memory, and language development. Since fairy tales have predictably happy endings in which the youngest, most simple and vulnerable characters always overcome the biggest, scariest, and most evil character, the children are left with a feeling of confidence in their own ability to meet and overcome adversity. It gives them a feeling of confidence in themselves and in the future. Problems in fairy tales are always overcome and resolved. These stories have a wealth of imagery and rich language. Creating mental pictures from the images in the story also strengthens the child's listening abilities.

After story we walk back to school singing and enjoying the company of each other. We end our day back at the stepping-stones in the kindergarten yard and sing our goodbye song and closing verse.

The following pages will provide you with a brief overview of the program and a list of the supplies that are provided to each family. An example of the bi-monthly suggested curriculum that is created to accompany the manuals and an example of a typical parent evening, which is an integral part of the program, is available upon request.

Many blessings,
Annie Bosque, MA in Waldorf Education
Creator and Teacher of the Cherry Blossom Outdoor Kindergarten Home Study Program
abosque@goldenvalleycharter.org

Cherry Blossom Outdoor Kindergarten Home Study Program Resource and Supply List

Each family is supplied with the following:

Resources:

- Christopherus Home School Resources: Kindergarten with your Three to Six Year Old by Donna Simmons
- The Waldorf Kindergarten Snack Book
- Simplicity Parenting by Kim John Payne
- The Complete Grimm's Fairy Tale Book
- Virtues Project Cards
- Monthly Curriculum created by Annie Bosque, along with Audio of Seasonal Circles
- Monthly Parent Meetings Covering Topics such as Media, Nutrition, Discipline, Toys, Rhythm, Fairy Tales, and Chores
- Individual Regular Check in Time with the Teacher
- Resource Hub via Parent Square

Supplies:

- Set of Stockmar Crayons
- Watercolor paints, paint board and brush
- Drawing paper and painting paper
- Finger knitting yarn
- Portfolio
- Beeswax
- Canvas tote

Cherry Blossom Outdoor Kindergarten Home Study Program Tuesday/Wednesday/Thursday Rhythm

- 8:15 Bell rings, families form a circle on the stepping-stones outside.
Circle Time
- 8:40 Nature Walk from GVRS to Lake Natoma (Wednesdays) and Norma Hamlin Park (Thursdays). We will remain on campus on Tuesdays.
- Play
 - Craft
 - Games
- 10:15 Snack
- Rice and Quinoa or Stone Soup cooked on the campfire stove (Tuesday)
 - Cherry Bars (Wednesday)
 - Homemade Aussie Bites (Thursday)
 - Fruit/Vegetables/Hot Tea served daily
- 10:45 Story
- 11:15 Return to Campus/Community Building Game
- 11:45 Goodbye

Homemade Aussie bites (recipe provided) will be served on Thursdays for snack. Families may take turns making them at home with their child and providing them for the rest of the class on a rotating schedule. If your child has dietary issues, please talk to your teacher.

The teacher will regularly meet individually with each family to review work samples and document learning. These meetings will take place on campus after school. A sign up sheet will be posted on the bulletin board. These meetings last 15-30 minutes and children may be present on the yard while we meet.

Parent evenings will take place monthly to discuss topics and review the suggested curriculum. The following topics will be covered: media and its influence on the young child, games/toys/movement, storytelling, nutrition, discipline, and the importance of rhythm. Parents will also learn to bake bread, paint with watercolors, experience story telling, and craft occasionally.

Cherry Blossom Outdoor Kindergarten Home Study Program Monday/Friday Home Rhythm

In Waldorf kindergartens, each day has its special activity: Monday is Painting Day, Wednesday is Crafts Day, and so on. This brings a comforting predictability to the children and helps them make sense of their world. Please refer to the chapter entitled, A Typical Day, in the Christopherus Homeschool Resources manual, as well as the "Suggested Curriculum" that is created for you, when deciding how to incorporate these elements in your daily/weekly rhythm at home. Documentation will be collected monthly in the Home Study program. In order to be in this program, the following activities must happen on days when children are home.

Monday

Nature Walk (refer to page 29 in your home school resource)

Household Chore (refer to page 27 in your home school resource)

Snack (refer to The Waldorf Kindergarten Snack Book)

Artistic Activity - Watercolor Painting (refer to page 39 in your home school resource)

Circle Time (refer to page 30 and 71-95 in your home school resource)

Story Time (refer to pages 31, 47-53, and 71-82 in your home school resource).

Friday

Nature Walk (refer to page 29 in your home school resource)

Household Chore (refer to page 27 in your home school resource)

Snack (I recommend baking bread on Fridays! Refer to The Waldorf Kindergarten Snack Book and handbook for suggestions and recipes.)

Artistic Activity - Coloring (refer to page 46 in your home school resource)

Circle Time (refer to page 30 and 71-95 in your home school resource)

Story Time (refer to pages 31, 47-53, and 71-82 in your home school resource).