



Homeschool Hybrid Frequently Asked Questions

At Birchtree, we view education as a living process that unfolds over time. Our homeschool hybrid program is designed to honor childhood, support families, and nurture each student's growth academically, socially, and creatively within a Waldorf-inspired framework.

What is a homeschool hybrid?

A homeschool hybrid honors the partnership between home and school. Families provide core academic instruction at home, while students also come to campus for shared experiences, artistic work, movement, and meaningful connection within a learning community.

How is Birchtree's homeschool program different from others?

Birchtree's homeschool hybrid program is thoughtfully designed to support families while remaining deeply rooted in Waldorf-inspired education. Families are guided by a comprehensive Waldorf curriculum provided by the school, while on-campus experiences emphasize beauty, creativity, rhythm, and developmentally appropriate learning.

About Waldorf Pedagogy

Waldorf education is a whole-child approach that nurtures the **hands, heart, and head**, honoring each child's stage of development. One guiding principle is "*start slow to finish*"

fast.” Learning is viewed as a living, unfolding journey shaped by wonder, imagination, and meaningful work.

A strong daily rhythm—morning routines, focused learning time, shared meals, chores, outdoor play, and restful evenings—forms the foundation of this approach. In the early years, children thrive with fewer scheduled activities and ample time for imaginative, self-directed play. As children mature, opportunities gradually and thoughtfully expand.

For example: - In **third grade**, students may join activities such as Battle of the Books or chess club. - By **fourth grade**, students are introduced to violin, Battle of the Books, chess club, sports teams, and NYO. - As students mature, additional extracurricular opportunities become available.

How do I enroll my child?

Enrollment in the homeschool hybrid program is determined through a **separate lottery**, distinct from Birchtree’s regular program.

- In early **February**, an **Intent-to-Enroll** form will be available on our website.
 - Families who submit the form will be entered into the lottery.
 - The lottery takes place in **early May**.
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If my child is already enrolled in the regular school program, can he/she just transfer into the homeschool hybrid?

The homeschool hybrid program and the regular program are separate. In order to transfer between the two, you would need to wait until the next enrollment period and enter the lottery for the program in which you would like to enroll.

If my child has a space in the regular program and gets into the homeschool hybrid through the lottery, and we wish to return to the regular program, can we just transfer back?

Families would need to wait until the following school year and reenter the regular program lottery.

If my child gets into the homeschool hybrid program and is on the waitlist for the full-time Birchtree regular program, can my child remain on the regular program’s waitlist and enter the regular program when a spot opens?

Your child may remain on the regular program waitlist and enroll in the regular program if a space becomes available.

Will there be a teacher-advisor to support parents?

Families are supported by a certified teacher with Waldorf experience who serves as a guide and partner in the learning journey. Through regular advisory sessions and professional consultation, parents receive support, encouragement, and pedagogical insight.

What types of things will be taught in the at-school classes?

On-campus classes are rich, artistic, and developmentally appropriate, offering students opportunities to engage their senses, movement, and imagination. They will be offered daily. Experiences include:

- Handwork
 - Visual arts (painting, drawing, modeling)
 - Form drawing
 - Singing and recorder
 - Violin
 - Circle activities
 - Games and movement
 - Nature walks
 - Seasonal storytelling, crafts, and activities
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Will homeschooled students be allowed to join the regular Birchtree classes for specials?

There may be occasional opportunities to join special classes or combined concert rehearsals. Homeschool hybrid students generally receive separate instruction.

What curriculum choices will be offered?

The primary Waldorf curriculum is published by **Oak Meadow**. Families may also choose to use:

- **Math Mammoth** for mathematics
 - **Roadmap to Literacy** and supplemental writing materials for language arts
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Will homeschooled students be allowed to participate in concerts?

Participation is optional and available to students who are prepared and whose families choose to participate.

What other traditional Birchtree activities will homeschooled students be allowed to participate in?

Homeschool hybrid students are warmly included in many cherished Birchtree traditions, including:

- Pentathlon
- NYO
- Lantern Walk
- Saint Nicholas and Saint Lucia visits
- Advent Spiral (within the homeschool group)
- Annual Art Show

Students may also participate in extracurricular activities such as sports, Drama Club, Battle of the Books, and Chess Club.

How else are Homeschool Hybrid families included in the Birchtree community?

Families are warmly invited to take part in community life and shared celebrations such as:

- Fall Faire
 - Holiday Market
 - May Faire
 - Birchtree Parent Group (BPG)
 - Parent Nights
 - Membership on the APC
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Will homeschool hybrid families receive an allotment?

Instead of a monetary allotment, Birchtree provides meaningful program support, including:

- A comprehensive Waldorf curriculum from Oak Meadow

- High-quality learning supplies (main lesson books, paints, brushes, yarn, knitting needles, beeswax, crayons, colored pencils, and more)
- On-campus classes in art, music, seasonal activities, circle time, games, nature walks, and outdoor play
- Professional consultation with a certified Waldorf-experienced teacher
- Participation in special school events and parenting circle classes

What grades will be allowed to participate in the homeschool hybrid program?

In the program's first year, priority is given to **Kindergarten–Grade 3**. If space allows, enrollment may expand to **Grades 4–6**, and in some cases **Grades 7–8**, depending on staffing and family needs.

How will students be assessed?

Assessment is a collaborative and thoughtful process that reflects the Waldorf value of truly seeing the child. Parents assess their children with guidance from the teacher-advisor using portfolio-based assessments aligned with the Birchtree report card.

Students also participate in mClass, Measures of Academic Progress (MAP), and AKStar, as required, to support academic insight and growth.

Will homeschool students in the upper grades be allowed to take high school courses?

Qualified students in Grades 7–8 may take early high school courses through an online platform.

May homeschool students in the upper grades take upper grades electives?

Upper grade homeschool students may take electives (“Choice Classes”) as space allows. Our electives are teacher designed and, in the past, have included classes such as cooking, newspaper, tea and books, competitive sports, crafting corner, woodworking, leather working, creative writing, debate, etc.