

July 2025

Dear Parents and Carers,

### Moving to the Arbor app

We are writing to let you know about an important development that will enhance the way we communicate with you and manage key aspects of school life.

From **September 2025**, our school will be transitioning to **Arbor**, which will act as a replacement for both ClassCharts and MCAS.

We will be deleting all Class Charts and MCAS accounts after **Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> July**. Parents will no longer have logins to either platform after that date; please bear in mind this means we will not be able to accept any payments during the summer holiday. We will be sharing Arbor logins with parents via email **by Monday 1<sup>st</sup> September**.

You will still be able to use MCAS to make payments **up to and including Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> July**, even for events that take place after that date, and we will keep a record of all payments received.

### Why Are We Making This Change?

As part of our ongoing commitment to improving communication, efficiency, and parent experience, we have reviewed our current systems and identified the need for a more integrated, user-friendly solution.

By switching to **Arbor**, we are consolidating multiple services into **one secure, easy-to-use platform**, reducing duplication and improving accessibility for families and staff alike.

### What Is Arbor?

Arbor is a modern MIS platform used by over 5,000 schools across the UK. It offers a parent app, a student app and a web portal that allows you to:

- Receive messages and updates from the school
- View your child's attendance, behaviour and academic progress
- Update contact and medical information

- Book and pay for clubs, trips and meals. All payments can be made online via Arbor, including cashless catering top-ups. You will once again be able to see what items your children have ordered from the canteen and will be able to select the size of instalment payments you make for trips

All in one place, using a secure login on your phone, tablet, or computer.

Please note that all items will be on Arbor for parents to pay for; students can still collect purchased items from the student reception, which will be open before school, and at break and lunch times. Student reception will not be staffed at any other times, and it will not be possible for students to make payments at student reception.

It is also worth noting that there will no longer be an option to pay over the phone or in person at student reception.

### **What Happens Next?**

We want to make the transition to Arbor as smooth as possible. Below is a timeline to guide you through what will happen and when.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Action</b>
<b>July 2025</b>	Classcharts and MCAS accounts will be deactivated after Thursday 17 <sup>th</sup> July. From this point, you will not be able to access these accounts and/or make any payments.
<b>Before 1<sup>st</sup> September</b>	We will share Arbor user instructions on our facebook page ( <a href="https://www.facebook.com/TheCastleSchool">https://www.facebook.com/TheCastleSchool</a> )
<b>By 1<sup>st</sup> September</b>	You will receive an <b>email invitation</b> to download the Arbor App and create your account. Students will be given a tutorial on how to use the app at home.
<b>First Week of Term – Sept 2025</b>	Arbor will be fully <b>live</b> – messages, attendance, behaviour and payments will all run through the new system.

You can also find the user instructions at <https://support.arbor-education.com/hc/en-us/articles/360020147458-Log-into-the-Parent-Portal-and-the-Parent-App>

We would like to thank you in advance for your patience while we make the adjustment to Arbor.

Yours faithfully



**Mr G Duenas**  
**School Business Manager**  
**The Castle School**