

The Charlotte Mason Education Association (CMEA)

Application for Recognition (Homeschools) and Accreditation (Microschools, Tutorials, Co-ops, and Small Schools)

*This application is designed to serve both homeschool families seeking **CMEA Recognition** and small schools seeking **CMEA Accreditation**. Applicants will complete a shared core section, followed by a pathway-specific section. Please forward your completed application and accompanying written statements and documentation to accreditation@mycmea.org.*

Note: Application fees will be paid by encrypted electronic invoice and sent to the email on the application.

Application Fees (non-refundable): **Homeschool:** \$50 | **Small School:** \$150.

Part I: Applicant Information (All Applicants)

Applicant Type (select one):

- Homeschool Family (Recognition)
- Microschool / Small School (Accreditation)

Primary Contact Name: _____

Email Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Name of Homeschool or School (if applicable): _____

Years Practicing Charlotte Mason Education: _____

Part II: Statement of Understanding and Commitment (All Applicants)

Please read and affirm the following statements:

- I/We have read and affirm the above **CMEA Statement on Faithful Charlotte Mason Education.** (See Appendix, p. 6-9)
- I/We understand that CMEA recognition and accreditation are voluntary, non-regulatory, and do not replace parental authority or state legal requirements.
- I/We understand that recognition and accreditation are time-limited and subject to renewal.
- I/We agree to represent CMEA recognition or accreditation accurately and respectfully.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Part III: Philosophy and Purpose (All Applicants)

1. Philosophy Statement

Please provide a written statement (2–4 pages) describing your understanding of Charlotte Mason’s philosophy of education and how it informs your educational choices.

Please address the following:

- Education as the science of relations
- Respect for the child as a person
- The role of living ideas in education

2. Sources of Authority

Which Charlotte Mason sources most influence your understanding and practice?
(e.g., *Home Education* series, *Parents’ Review*, PNEU programmes)

Part IV: Curriculum and Pedagogy (All Applicants)

3. Living Books

Describe how living books function as the core of your curriculum. Include representative book lists and selection criteria.

4. Narration

Explain how narration is practiced across subjects and ages (oral, written, drawn, dramatic, etc.).

5. Lesson Structure and Habits

Describe your approach to lesson length, attention, habit formation, and atmosphere.

6. Nature Study and the Arts

Explain how nature study, art study, and music study are integrated as essential elements rather than enrichment.

Part V: Assessment and Growth (All Applicants)

7. Assessment Philosophy

How do you understand assessment within a Charlotte Mason framework? Describe the role of narration, observation, examinations, or portfolios.

Part VI: Evidence Submission (All Applicants)

Please submit the following supporting materials:

- Sample schedules (at least one term)
- Representative book lists
- Samples of student narrations (scanned or photographed)
- Nature study samples or records

Part VII-A: Homeschool Recognition Pathway

(Complete this section only if applying as a homeschool family)

8A. Family Context

Briefly describe your family structure, ages of children, and learning context.

9A. Home Atmosphere and Habit Training

Describe how atmosphere, discipline, and habit training are approached in your home.

10A. Reflection on Growth

What areas of Charlotte Mason education are you currently strengthening or seeking clarity in?

11A. Optional Interview

We would welcome a reflective conversation with a CMEA reviewer.

Part VII-B: Microschool, Tutorial, Co-op, and Small School Accreditation Pathway

(Complete this section only if applying as a microschool, tutorial, co-op, or small school)

8B. School Overview

Provide a brief history of your school, including founding purpose and current enrollment.

9B. Governance and Leadership

Describe your governance structure, leadership roles, and decision-making processes.

10B. Teacher Formation

Describe how teachers are prepared, supported, and formed in Charlotte Mason philosophy.

11B. Student Life and Culture

Explain how school culture reflects respect for the child as a person and fosters a humane atmosphere.

12B. Operations and Compliance

Confirm that your school complies with applicable state and local laws and maintains basic child safety policies.

13B. Site Visit (if applicable)

We are open to a site visit as part of the accreditation process.

Part VIII: Final Reflection (All Applicants)

14. Reflective Summary

What does faithful Charlotte Mason education mean to you, and why are you seeking recognition or accreditation through CMEA?

Submission Checklist

- Completed application form
- Philosophy statement
- Supporting evidence
- Application fee (*fees will be paid by encrypted electronic invoice and sent to the email on the application*)

Closing Statement

CMEA recognition and accreditation are intended to be formative rather than merely evaluative. Applicants are encouraged to approach this process as an opportunity for reflection, clarification, and growth within a community committed to preserving Charlotte Mason's educational philosophy.

Thank you for your thoughtful participation in The Charlotte Mason Education Association.

We look forward to serving you!

Appendix: The Charlotte Mason Education Association (CMEA)

Statement on Faithful Charlotte Mason Education

Preamble

The Charlotte Mason Education Association (CMEA) exists to preserve, articulate, and recognize faithful Charlotte Mason education for the good of children, families, and educational communities. This statement establishes the philosophical foundation upon which all CMEA recognition, accreditation, and guidance rest.

CMEA affirms that Charlotte Mason education is not a collection of techniques, curricula, or aesthetic preferences, but a **coherent philosophy of education** grounded in enduring ideas about the nature of the child, the purpose of education, and the formation of persons. Faithful practice requires ongoing study, thoughtful application, and humility before the ideas Charlotte Mason articulated.

I. Authority and Sources

CMEA recognizes Charlotte Mason's own writings as the primary and authoritative source for understanding her educational philosophy. These include, but are not limited to:

- The *Home Education Series*
- The *Parents' Review* journal
- Programmes and syllabi of the Parents' National Educational Union (PNEU)

Secondary interpretations, modern curricula, and contemporary applications are valued insofar as they remain consistent with these primary sources.

II. The Child as a Person

CMEA affirms Charlotte Mason's foundational conviction that "**children are born persons.**" Each child possesses inherent dignity, moral capacity, and intellectual appetite. Education must therefore respect the child as a whole person—mind, body, and spirit—and avoid manipulation, coercion, or reduction to measurable outputs.

Faithful Charlotte Mason education honors the child through compassionate discipline, appropriate freedom, and a relational atmosphere marked by respect and trust.

III. Education as the Science of Relations

CMEA affirms that education is the science of relations: the formation of meaningful relationships between the learner and the world of ideas, nature, knowledge, and human thought. The goal of education is not the accumulation of information or skills alone, but the cultivation of rich and lasting intellectual, moral, and spiritual relationships.

Faithful practice seeks breadth, balance, and depth, offering children a wide feast of ideas worthy of their attention.

IV. Living Ideas and Living Books

CMEA affirms that education is nourished by **living ideas**, most often encountered through **living books**—books written by authors with firsthand knowledge, literary power, and passion for their subject. Living books invite attention, imagination, and moral engagement.

Faithful Charlotte Mason education resists reliance on textbooks, summaries, and fragmented materials that diminish intellectual vitality.

V. Narration as the Act of Knowing

CMEA affirms narration as the central means by which students process, assimilate, and demonstrate knowledge. Through narration—oral, written, drawn, or otherwise expressed—students actively engage with ideas and make them their own.

Faithful practice treats narration not as an assessment tool alone, but as a formative habit of attention, articulation, and thought.

VI. Habit Formation and Moral Education

CMEA affirms the formative power of habit in shaping character and conduct. Education includes the intentional cultivation of good habits—attention, truthfulness, diligence, kindness—within a stable and orderly atmosphere.

Habit training is undertaken with gentleness, consistency, and respect for the child's moral agency, avoiding both coercion and neglect.

VII. Nature Study and the World Beyond the Classroom

CMEA affirms nature study as an essential element of Charlotte Mason education. Regular, direct engagement with the natural world fosters observation, wonder, humility, and relationship.

Faithful practice values firsthand encounters with nature over secondary representations and integrates outdoor study as a living discipline rather than an occasional activity.

VIII. The Arts and the Formation of Taste

CMEA affirms the central place of art, music, poetry, and literature in the formation of taste and imagination. Art study and music study are not enrichment, but essential components of a broad and humane education.

Faithful practice introduces students to works of lasting worth and allows sustained, attentive engagement without over-analysis or trivialization.

IX. Assessment, Examinations, and Growth

CMEA affirms assessment practices that align with Charlotte Mason's emphasis on narration, reflection, and thoughtful examination. Examinations are understood as opportunities for recall, synthesis, and expression, not as instruments of pressure or ranking.

Faithful practice resists overreliance on standardized testing and outcome-driven models that distort educational aims.

X. Teacher Formation and Responsibility

CMEA affirms that faithful Charlotte Mason education requires teachers who are themselves formed by the philosophy they practice. Teachers bear responsibility for preparation, restraint, and continual growth in understanding.

Teaching is understood as a moral and intellectual vocation, requiring attentiveness to ideas, persons, and atmosphere.

XI. Fidelity and Faithful Variation

CMEA recognizes that faithful Charlotte Mason education may be expressed in diverse cultural, institutional, and family contexts. Fidelity does not require uniformity of curriculum, schedule, or method, but adherence to core principles.

CMEA distinguishes between **faithful variation**, which applies principles thoughtfully, and **philosophical departure**, which undermines the coherence of Charlotte Mason education.

XII. Stewardship and Continuity

CMEA understands its role as one of stewardship rather than ownership. The Association exists to guard clarity, encourage careful practice, and resist drift as Charlotte Mason education continues to grow in popularity.

This statement serves as the enduring philosophical foundation for all CMEA recognition, accreditation, standards, and guidance.

Adopted by The Charlotte Mason Education Association as a public affirmation of commitment to faithful Charlotte Mason education.