Buy or build?

What every school owner should know before choosing school management software, and an honest comparison of building your own system with running your school on EaseAcademia.

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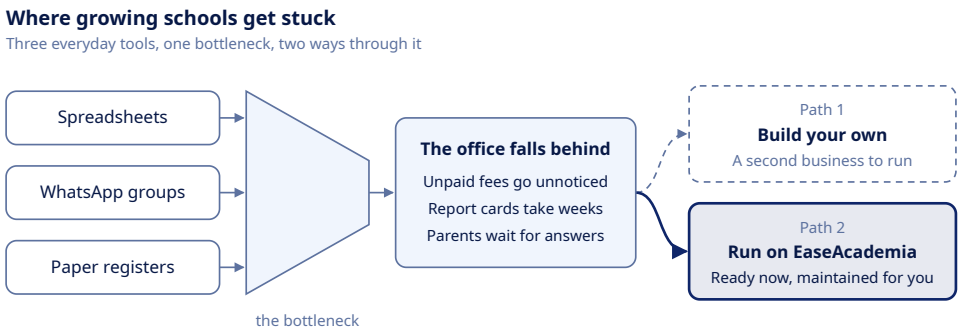
Before you choose

EaseAcademia is an online platform that runs a whole school from one system: student records, attendance, results, fees, staff, boarding and communication with families. It is built and maintained by a professional team for nursery, primary and secondary schools.

This guide is for owners deciding between two ways of getting school software: paying developers to build a system of your own, or running your school on a finished platform like EaseAcademia. It sets out what each path really involves, where the money and the time go, and what each one asks of you once it is running. Where a sentence describes EaseAcademia, it describes the product as it works today.

Every growing school reaches the same bottleneck

At some point the spreadsheets, WhatsApp groups and paper registers stop keeping up. Fees go unpaid because nobody noticed. Report cards take weeks. Parents ask questions the office cannot answer quickly.



The bottleneck: the tools that served a small school stop keeping up, and there are two ways through it.

	Path 1: Build your own	Path 2: Run on EaseAcademia
What you do	Hire one or more developers to write software just for your school	Switch on a finished platform that already runs the whole school day
What you set up	Every screen, every report and every rule, designed from scratch	Your own classes, students, staff and fee structure

	Path 1: Build your own	Path 2: Run on EaseAcademia
What comes after	Hosting, protecting, backing up and fixing it, for as long as the school exists	A professional team keeps it safe, running and improving while you focus on teaching

Building your own is a second business

Most owners picture a one-off cost: pay a developer, receive a system. In practice the software needs attention every single day, and the bill never stops.

1. **Months 1 to 3:** hire, explain how the school works, and agree on what to build.
2. **Months 4 to 12:** write the first version. Most schools see nothing usable before this.
3. **Launch:** move the data in, train the staff, and discover what was missed.
4. **Every year after:** fix bugs, add features, renew servers, and respond when it breaks at exam time.

The part nobody budgets for: this timeline assumes the first developer stays. If they leave, the school owns a system nobody else understands.

What EaseAcademia gives you on day one

Everything below is part of EaseAcademia's Base Platform, which every school has from the first day.

- **Student records:** every child's file, class history, guardians and documents in one place.
- **Staff directory:** who works at the school, what they teach, and what they are allowed to see.
- **Attendance:** daily and per-lesson registers, with absences visible to parents.
- **Gradebook and results:** marks entered once; report cards and broadsheets produced from them.
- **Behaviour and rewards:** award points, log incidents, and let parents see progress.
- **Announcements and messaging:** reach every parent, teacher or class in one send, free and unlimited inside the app.
- **Parent, student and staff portals:** each person signs in and sees exactly what concerns them, with no charge per login.
- **Your school's identity:** your logo, colours and name on the portals and on the documents the school issues.
- **Activity trail:** a record of who changed what and when, so nothing is lost or disputed.

Add modules as you need them

Eight add-on modules cover the rest of school life. You switch on only the ones your school uses, and pay for nothing else. Prices below are EaseAcademia's current price list.

Module	What it gives the school	How it is charged
Finance	Fee bills, online payment, receipts, outstanding balances, refunds and scholarships	1% of each fee paid online, 1% of each payment received by hand
Human Resources	Recruitment, leave, training, performance reviews and staff discipline	₦750.00 per staff/month
Library	Book catalogue, borrowing, returns and overdue tracking	₦1.50 per copy/month
Hostel	Rooms, bed spaces, roll call, hostel fees, visitors and leave passes	₦750.00 per boarder/month
Inventory	Every asset the school owns, from purchase to repair to disposal	₦150.00 per asset/month
Health Clinic	Sick bay visits, medication logs, health records and incident reports	₦500.00 per clinic visit recorded
School Store	Uniforms, books and supplies sold online to parents, with orders tracked	1% of each order, capped at ₦5,000.00
Computer-Based Exams	Secure question banks, timed exams on screen, automatic marking	₦200.00 per student per exam subject

A day school never pays for Hostel. A school without a library never pays for Library. Modules can be switched on at any time and are charged by the day while they are on. Once switched on, a module stays on for at least 30 days.

The size of the job

This is what a school would have to rebuild to match EaseAcademia. These figures were measured directly from the EaseAcademia product in October 2026. They are not estimates.

Figure	What it measures
60+	areas of school life covered, from admissions to alumni and from fees to first aid
390+	kinds of record kept: students, invoices, exam papers, bed spaces and more
1.5 million+	lines of software, written, tested and maintained by a professional team
25	complete school journeys, such as enrolling a child or collecting a fee, rehearsed end to end by automated tests
600+	automated test files that catch mistakes before your staff ever see them
6	separate applications working together, from the portals people sign in to, to the public website

Where the money goes

Building your own	Running on EaseAcademia
Salaries that never end. Developers are needed after launch as much as before it.	**One charge replaces salaries, servers, security and support.** No set-up fee and no annual contract, from ₦300.00 per student per month.
Servers, backups and security paid for and watched over by you, every month.	**Billed by the day.** The bill follows your roll: a student who leaves stops counting the next day.
Nothing usable for months. The school keeps running on paper while it waits.	**Working from the first week.** Import your students and staff from a spreadsheet.
Improvement stops when the budget stops. The system freezes at the last thing you paid for.	**Improvements arrive automatically,** paid for by every school on the platform, not just you.
Every mistake is yours to fix, at your cost, on your timeline.	**Mistakes are found and fixed by the team,** with automated checks before every change reaches your office.

For the full price list and two worked examples of a month's bill, see A guide for school owners.

Time is the cost owners feel most

A system that arrives in eighteen months has already cost you several fee terms of unpaid balances, several rounds of late report cards, and the goodwill of parents who gave up asking.



The same school year, two ways. Illustrative, measured in school terms.

On EaseAcademia, a school goes live in four steps:

Step	What happens	When
Sign up and set up the school	A guided sign-up builds your classes, calendar and starting lists	Within days
Load students and staff	Upload the spreadsheets you already keep; errors are flagged row by row before anything is saved	Same week

Step	What happens	When
Invite teachers and parents	Each person gets a sign-in for exactly the part of the school that concerns them	Same week
Collect the first fee online	Bills go out, parents pay from their phone, receipts are issued automatically	First term

Keeping children's data safe

Children's health records, home addresses, guardians' phone numbers, fee ledgers and exam papers: this is exactly the kind of information criminals target, and that parents trust you to protect. On EaseAcademia, these protections are built in:

- **Locked doors:** everything is refused unless a role allows it. A class teacher need never see the fee ledger, and a bursar need never touch a grade.
- **A record of every change:** who changed a mark, who issued a refund, who edited a student's file, and when, including attempts that were refused. Disputes end in minutes.
- **Protected storage:** records are encrypted in transit and at rest, sensitive notes such as medical and discipline records carry a second layer of encryption, and each school's data is kept apart from every other school's.
- **Warnings when something is wrong:** suspicious sign-ins, repeated failed attempts and unusual activity raise security alerts, so a problem is noticed rather than missed.

With a home-built system, all of this is a wish list. Getting it right takes specialists, and getting it wrong puts the school's name in the news. The security page describes each control in detail.

What the law asks of every school

In Nigeria, the **Nigeria Data Protection Act 2023 (NDPA)** applies to every school that keeps personal information about pupils, parents or staff, whichever software it uses. The school is the **data controller**: the duties are the school's, and the Nigeria Data Protection Commission (NDPC) enforces them. In plain terms, a school must:

- collect only the information it needs, for a clear purpose and on a lawful basis, with a parent's or guardian's consent where a child's information requires it;
- keep that information secure, with suitable technical and organisational measures;
- let pupils, parents and staff see, correct or obtain the information held about them when they ask;
- report a personal data breach to the Commission within 72 hours of becoming aware of it, and tell the people affected where the risk to them is high;
- make sure any company handling the information on its behalf, whether a developer, a hosting provider or a software platform, is bound in writing to protect it.

Larger data controllers may also need to register with the Commission. Failures can bring fines of up to ₦10 million or 2% of annual gross revenue, whichever is higher, for a controller of major importance, and ₦2 million or 2% for others.

How EaseAcademia helps you meet it

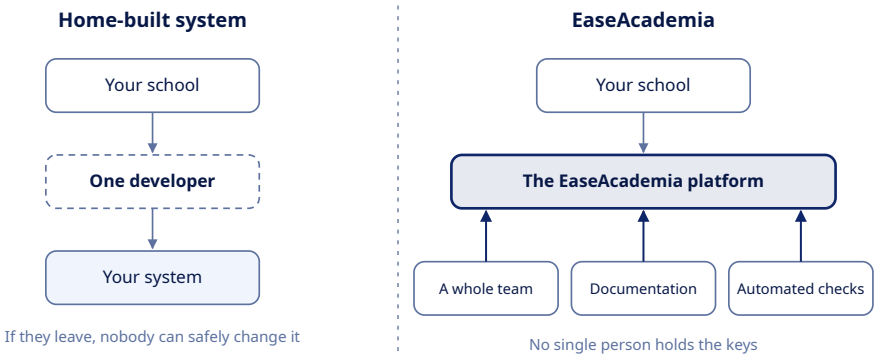
No software makes a school compliant on its own. What EaseAcademia does is give the school the controls the Act expects, already built, together with a written agreement covering its part.

What the Act expects	If you build your own	On EaseAcademia
Security measures	You design, build and test every control	Role-based access, encryption in transit and at rest, and field-level encryption for sensitive notes
Knowing who did what	You build and protect an audit log	A sealed audit trail of every action, including refused attempts
Answering requests from parents and staff	You build the exports and searches	Records, reports and the audit trail export to CSV at any time; a full copy is available on request
A written agreement with whoever handles the data	You draft one with your developer and your host	EaseAcademia acts as processor under a published data processing addendum
Reporting a breach within 72 hours	You build your own monitoring	Security alerts, and EaseAcademia notifies the school without undue delay so it can meet its own deadline

This section is a plain-language summary, not legal advice. Take advice on your school's own obligations under the Act.

When your developer leaves

The strongest risk with a home-built system is the one nobody plans for: the people who built it moving on.



Who your school depends on: one person, or a team with written documentation and automated checks.

Home-built system	EaseAcademia
The system lives in one or two people's heads.	A team, not an individual, maintains the platform.
When they leave, nobody can safely change anything.	Every part is documented, so any member of the team can pick it up.

Home-built system	EaseAcademia
A new developer will usually recommend starting over.	Automated checks stop mistakes before a change goes out.
Meanwhile, fees, results and records depend on software nobody understands.	Your school's data and daily running never depend on one person being available.

EaseAcademia in real conditions

Everything in this section describes how EaseAcademia itself behaves today, not a system a school would build.

When the internet is unreliable

Teachers can keep taking attendance and entering marks when the connection drops. The work is kept on the device and sent when the connection returns, once and only once.



How EaseAcademia handles a dropped connection: the work carries on, waits, and is sent once.

Large jobs, such as promoting a whole school to the next class or sending bills to every parent, run in the background and resume where they stopped if they are interrupted.

Improvements you do not pay for twice

- The platform is worked on every week by a professional team.
- New capabilities, such as computer-based exams or behaviour rewards, are added for every school at once.
- Ideas from one school benefit all schools. A home-built system only ever learns from one.
- Your school benefits from the mistakes other schools already made, so you do not have to make them.

Control without building

"But I want it to work *my* way." The strongest argument for building is control. Here is how much of it you keep on EaseAcademia.

- **Your identity everywhere:** your logo, colours and school name on the portals, report cards, receipts and the school's public pages.

- **Roles you define:** create your own positions, such as Head of Boarding or Exams Officer, and decide precisely what each may see and do.
- **Approvals your way:** decide which office signs off a refund, a leave request or a purchase.
- **Documents in your format:** report cards, admission letters and receipts follow the designs your school chooses, including designs you supply, not one fixed layout.
- **Only the modules you choose:** switch off what you do not use. Your staff never see clutter that does not apply to your school.
- **Your data, in and out:** bring records in from your spreadsheets, and take reports and exports out whenever you need them.

When building might still make sense

We would rather lose a sale than mislead a school. Building your own can be the right choice if:

- your institution has genuinely unusual needs that no product on the market serves, such as statutory reporting no other school does;
- you already employ a software team for other reasons and can absorb the ongoing cost of one more system;
- you have the budget to wait a year or more for a first version, and to keep paying after it launches.

Questions to ask any provider, including us

Question	EaseAcademia's answer
Can I take my data out at any time, in a format I can open?	Yes. Reports, lists and the audit trail export to CSV at any time, and a full copy of the school's data is available on request.
What exactly is included in the base price, and what costs extra?	The Base Platform and every portal are included. Add-on modules and usage such as SMS are priced separately, on the published price list.
Who do I call when something breaks on results day, and how fast do they answer?	"Report a problem" is on every screen, and support@easeacademia.com answers most enquiries within one business day. There is no published uptime guarantee at present.
What happens to my school if your company stops operating?	Because your records can be exported at any time, the school can always hold its own copy. When a school leaves, it chooses whether its data is returned or deleted.

Side by side

What matters to an owner	Build your own	EaseAcademia
Time until the school runs on it	Many months to a year or more	Days to weeks
What you pay	Salaries, servers, security and support, for ever	One prepaid charge, measured by the day
Who keeps it working	Your developer, if they stay	A professional team, every day

What matters to an owner	Build your own	EaseAcademia
Protection of records	Only as good as your developer's expertise	Built in, monitored and tested
Data protection duties under the NDPA	Every control is yours to build and prove	The controls are built in, with a written processor agreement
Improvements over time	Only what you pay for next	Continuous, shared by every school
Risk if a key person leaves	Severe: the system may need rebuilding	None to the school
Control over how it works	Total, at total cost	Roles, approvals, designs and modules you set
Works when the internet drops	Only if you build it	Yes: work is saved and sent later

See it with your own school's data

Bring a class list and a fee structure to a demo. We will set your school up in front of you, and you can judge for yourself whether it is worth building instead. Book a demo or write to sales@easeacademia.com.

Your school's focus is education. Ours is the software that runs it.

The latest version of this document is always at https://easeacademia.com/resources/buy-or-build.