ELLERSFORD

SCHOOL FUTURES & TRANSFORMATION

Helping schools shape their future.

A strategic partnership for leading international schools and international education groups

THE PROSPECTUS

FUTURES INTELLIGENCE · INSTITUTIONAL VISION · SUPPORTED TRANSFORMATION

2026 / 2027

The future will not wait for a school to become unsuccessful.

A high-performing school can be excellent today—and still need to reconsider how it creates educational value tomorrow.

Premium schools are chosen for much more than curriculum delivery. Families invest in exceptional teaching, individual attention, trusted relationships, wellbeing, opportunities and a distinctive institutional experience. Those expectations will endure, but the ways in which schools meet them are changing.

Advances in AI, emerging evidence about learning, changing workforce models, shifting family expectations and new economic pressures are challenging assumptions about how schools should be designed and operated. No single technology or reform determines the answer; uncertainty is precisely why deliberate institutional foresight matters.

> *The question is not simply whether our school is successful today. It is what our school must become to remain exceptional tomorrow.*

The questions facing governing boards

Educational value. What will distinguish a premium learning experience when access to information and automated tutoring becomes more widespread?

Learning design. Which elements of curriculum, assessment, teaching and student support should endure—and which deserve redesign?

People and productivity. How can we make more effective use of professional time while protecting relationships, wellbeing and educational quality?

Institutional resilience. What changes to governance, investment, operating models and partnerships will make the school stronger over the next decade?

The OECD's Trends Shaping Education 2025 recommends structured futures thinking as a basis for present-day decisions. UNESCO's guidance on generative AI emphasises human agency, safeguarding and thoughtful evaluation rather than technology adoption for its own sake. See selected references on the final page.

An independent partner for the schools ahead.

Ellersford helps leading schools and education groups translate an uncertain future into strategic choices—and those choices into meaningful change.

What we do

We combine strategic foresight, institutional discovery, collaborative future design and ongoing implementation support. Our work begins by examining what might change in education, not by assuming that something is wrong with the school.

From there, we work with owners, governors, senior leaders and school communities to define a future that is ambitious, educationally credible, distinctive and financially sustainable. We then support the institution in building the capability to realise it.

> *We do not prescribe what the school of the future must look like. We help each institution determine—and realise—its own.*

What makes the approach different

Future-first. We begin with plausible developments and strategic uncertainty, not merely a review of current performance.

Institution-specific. The school's values, heritage, community and ambitions shape the destination; our method does not impose a preferred ideology.

Board-level. Educational ambition is connected with investment, governance, people, infrastructure and long-term institutional value.

Implementation-minded. The partnership continues beyond the blueprint to support prioritisation, pilots, learning and adaptation.

Evidence-conscious. We distinguish established facts, emerging evidence, plausible scenarios and untested assumptions.

The Ellersford Futures Framework.

Five connected stages move an institution from informed foresight to sustained transformation. The process is structured; the destination is never predetermined.

01

Explore — *What might change?*

Investigate the technological, educational, social and economic developments that could reshape premium schooling.

BOARD OUTPUT Futures landscape, evidence register and plausible scenarios.

02

Discover — *What makes us distinctive?*

Understand the school's identity, experience, present educational and operating model, stakeholder priorities and capacity for change.

BOARD OUTPUT Institutional identity and future-readiness baseline.

03

Envision — *Which future will we choose?*

Compare defensible future models and co-design an educational, organisational and investment blueprint aligned with the school's ambition.

BOARD OUTPUT Preferred future, strategic options and costed roadmap.

04

Transform — *How will we make it real?*

Mobilise selected initiatives, support leaders, test changes on a manageable scale, monitor risks and adapt delivery.

BOARD OUTPUT 90-day plans, initiative charters, steering rhythm and pilot evaluations.

05

Evolve — *How do we keep progressing?*

Evaluate what has changed for students and the institution; reassess emerging conditions and refine future priorities.

BOARD OUTPUT Annual Futures & Impact Review and renewed decisions.

The school retains governance, decision rights and responsibility for implementing its transformation. Ellersford brings structured foresight, independent challenge, specialist insight and continuity of support.

One institution. Many possible futures.

The framework looks across the whole school, but no institution should be forced into a standard set of reforms.

01

Learning & student experience

Personalised learning; curriculum and assessment; teaching design; AI literacy; student support, inclusion and wellbeing.

02

People & institutional culture

Leadership capacity; professional development; the design of work; staff experience; organisational culture and change capability.

03

Governance & sustainability

Board effectiveness; strategic investment; financial resilience; operating models; risk; institutional differentiation and value.

04

Environments & innovation

Purposeful technology; campus and learning spaces; information systems; research partnerships; community connections.

How priorities are selected

Each proposed transformation is tested against educational purpose, institutional identity, strength of evidence, alternatives, affordability, feasibility, safeguarding, equity and the ability to demonstrate meaningful impact. Some proposals should be piloted. Others should be redesigned—or rejected.

> *The objective is not maximum change. It is better education, stronger institutions and the capability to keep evolving.*

Our four domains help leaders organise complex choices; they are not a predetermined checklist of projects for every client.

Tangible decisions, not simply recommendations.

Ellersford's commercial engagements are tailored to the institution's size, ambition, governance and implementation capacity.

I Futures & Readiness Review

A focused examination of the forces most relevant to the institution and its readiness to respond. The board receives a Futures Landscape Brief, an institutional identity and readiness assessment, and a prioritised opportunity and risk map.

II Institutional Futures Blueprint

A facilitated process through which leaders explore meaningful strategic alternatives, agree a preferred institutional future, and develop a credible blueprint. Outputs include future options, a board-approved direction, an educational and operating model, a sequenced roadmap and an investment case.

III Transformation & Evolution Partnership

A continuing advisory relationship supporting selected initiatives through implementation and evaluation. Deliverables may include change charters, governance reviews, steering discussions, pilot evaluations, progress dashboards and an Annual Futures & Impact Review.

Clarity on roles

The governing board sets ambition, approves material decisions and exercises oversight.

School leadership owns implementation, staff management, safeguarding and day-to-day delivery.

Ellersford provides foresight, structured challenge, specialist advice, facilitation and independent evaluation support.

Project scope, duration, fees, responsibilities and acceptance criteria are agreed individually. International education group mandates may begin with a portfolio-level assessment and selected school pilots.

Progress without compromising principles.

Ellersford's commitment to the future is inseparable from its responsibility to students and the institutions entrusted to its advice.

Students first. Learning, wellbeing, safeguarding, dignity and inclusion are not optional trade-offs.

Independence. Recommendations must be driven by institutional benefit, not undisclosed supplier incentives.

Respect for identity. Schools remain the authors of their future. We challenge assumptions without prescribing a universal educational philosophy.

Value-based productivity. Efficiency gains should improve educational quality and human capacity, not automatically result in workforce reductions.

Evidence with integrity. We do not present hypotheses as facts, activity as impact, or correlation as proof of causation.

Proportionate innovation. Technology, new structures and alternative pedagogies must earn their place through a credible case for student and institutional value.

What meaningful impact might look like

Better learning and progression; more responsive student support; improved belonging and wellbeing; more purposeful teacher time; stronger leadership capability; disciplined investment; and greater readiness for changing expectations. The measures are agreed with each institution and assessed against an appropriate baseline.

> *A school can modernise its systems without improving education. Our responsibility is to distinguish the two.*

Shape the next chapter deliberately.

Ellersford works best with schools and education groups that are already successful in important ways—but ambitious enough to question what success should mean tomorrow.

Who we seek to partner with

Owners, governing boards and executive teams of premium and super-premium international schools, and leaders of international education groups, who see future-readiness as a strategic responsibility rather than a passing initiative.

The first conversation

An initial confidential discussion might explore the assumptions underpinning your current school model, the changes most likely to affect its proposition over the next decade, the future you hope to build for students, and the investment or leadership decisions that may follow. There is no obligation to commission a full transformation programme.

Begin the conversation

To arrange an initial confidential discussion, please write to us. We respond personally to every enquiry.

enquiry@ellersford.org

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SELECTED READING informing the sector context (no endorsement of Ellersford is implied): OECD, *Trends Shaping Education 2025* — oecd.org/en/publications/trends-shaping-education-2025_ee6587fd-en.html; UNESCO, *Guidance for generative AI in education and research* (2023) — unesco.org/en/articles/guidance-generative-ai-education-and-research; ISC Research, *Global International Schools Snapshot 2026* — iscresearch.com/reports/global-international-schools-snapshot-2026/.

Prospectus · November 2026. This document outlines a proposed advisory approach. Engagements are subject to agreed scope and contract.