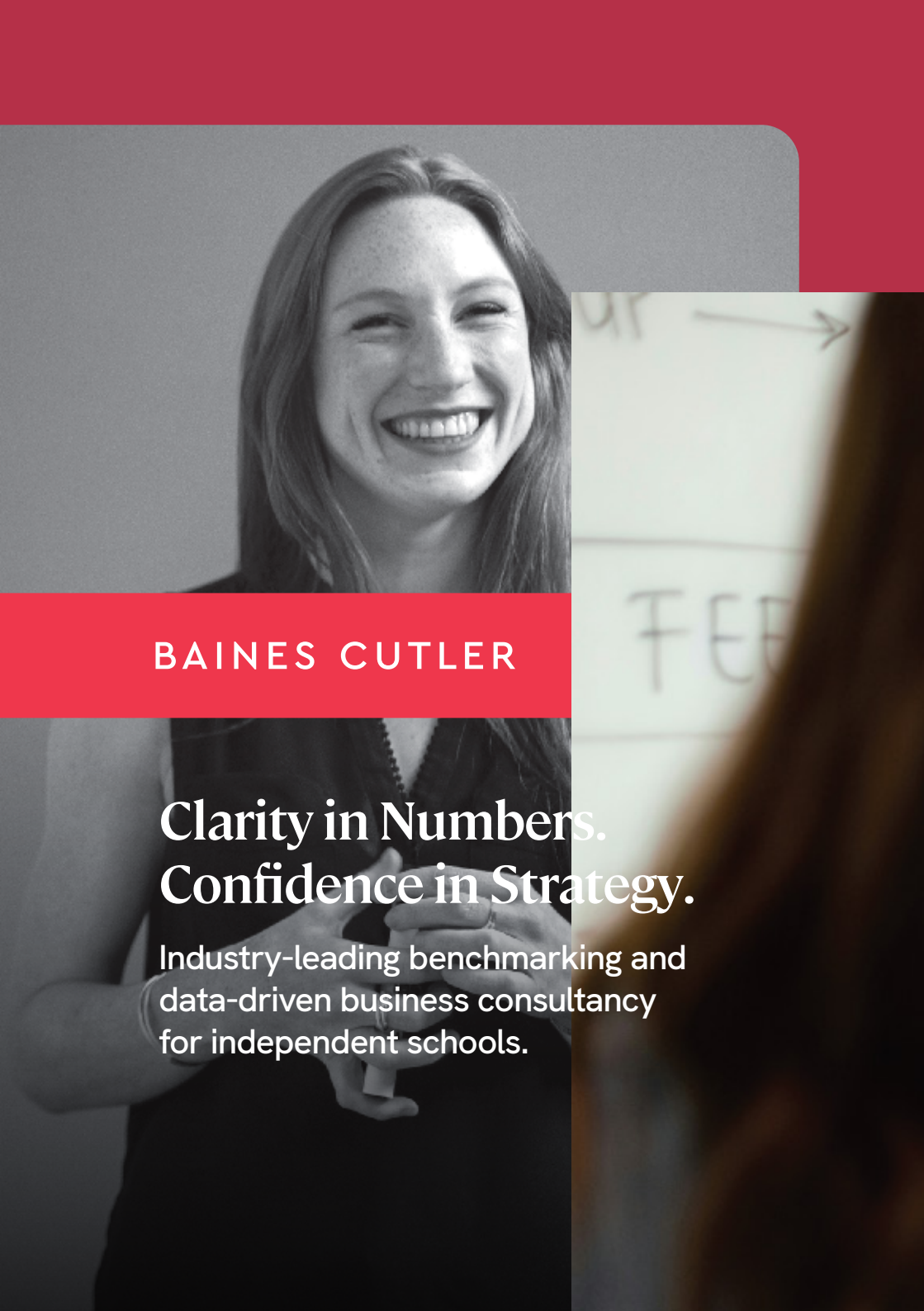
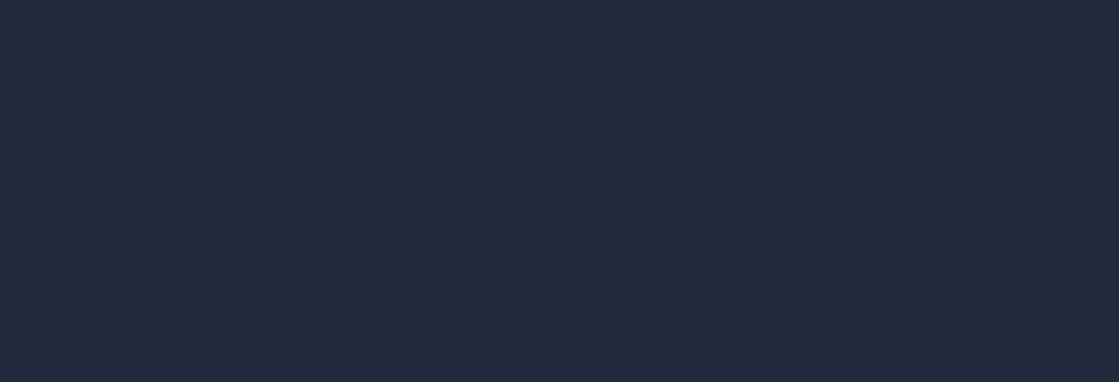




BAINES CUTLER

**Clarity in Numbers.
Confidence in Strategy.**

Industry-leading benchmarking and
data-driven business consultancy
for independent schools.





Baines Cutler: Your School's Knowledge Partner.

Empowering decisions
with precision data,
for better research
& market intelligence.

Baines Cutler is a specialist business consultancy offering bespoke services designed to solve independent schools' unique challenges and realise their opportunities.

We combine deep market knowledge, proprietary data and unrivalled strategic insight to help schools make confident decisions across finance, operations, curriculum, marketing and their offerings to parents and pupils.

With a focus on finance, culture, and strategy, we deliver effective and sustainable solutions that support each school's distinct model and help them thrive in a constantly changing educational and economic landscape.

Our people, committed to your team.

At Baines Cutler, we work as one team - combining sharp thinking, sector insight, and collaborative energy to deliver practical, high-impact solutions.

Our culture is honest, focused and built on trust. We listen carefully, challenge constructively and work closely with each other and our clients to solve complex problems with clarity and confidence. Everyone's voice is valued; we believe the best ideas come from open conversations and shared perspectives.

We're a small but mighty team, each member bringing a unique blend of experience and sector-leading expertise, united by a shared commitment to meaningful work that drives real change. There are no silos, just a hands-on, cross-functional way of working that keeps us agile and aligned to each client's requirements. Whether running data models, planning strategy or shaping communications, we do it together with curiosity, care and a focus on outcomes that initiate change.

“Our proprietary data, underpinned by a thorough understanding of a school's three key areas; finance, strategy and culture, validates us as your key business partner.”



Rhiannon Cutler, Founder



Financial Services



Turning complex
data into clear
actionable facts.

Financial Benchmarking Survey

Launched every January, the Independent Schools' Financial Benchmarking Survey is the most authoritative source of financial information on the sector available today. Covering 75% of all ISC pupils, it has grown over 29 years to become the official financial survey for the sector, supported by all the key associations.

Participants receive a free published report covering overall market intelligence and can commission a bespoke report comparing their school's key ratios against a small group of most comparable peers.

Custom Financial Benchmarking Survey

Using data from the Financial Survey, this bespoke report allows schools to compare their own school's financial performance and key ratios directly with other peer schools. Although we are not allowed to compare a school with a specific list of named schools, we can work with you to agree suitable peer group so that you can see your data against your most comparable schools.





Teacher Pay & Benefits Survey

The Teacher Pay and Benefits Survey is the most detailed and authoritative information available for the schools sector in the UK. Participants into this triennial survey receive a bespoke report, comparing teacher pay structures only to a peer group of

most comparable schools, and our approach to this service cuts through OFT compliance regulations to give schools comparative information on incremental scales, progression, allowances, benefits SMT pay, pensions and much more.

Teacher Workload Reviews

We've developed a unique teacher deployment modelling system that provides a full analysis and cost of how teacher time and cost is deployed across your school. Unlike a standard timetable review, our model takes a broader view, accounting for pastoral responsibilities, co-curricular activities, sports, clubs, boarding duties and all other contributions made by teaching staff.

The most common issues we uncover include unsustainable pupil-teacher ratios, settings that don't reflect teaching strengths, costly or inefficient co-curricular programmes

and disparities in how staff contribute to wider school life. These pressures often lead to inefficiencies and strain on both resources and people.

Our approach is data-led and school-specific. We analyse teacher workloads in detail, including deployment across subjects and year groups, class sizes and broader responsibilities. This insight is then used to make targeted recommendations, ensuring your resources are focused in the right places and that staff contributions align with your school's priorities, strengths and strategic direction.

“Our workload analysis service acts as a mirror to a school, showing each client how teacher time and cost deployment currently works, to enable every client to see clearly what is as well as what could be in the context of strategic priorities. The more complex the model, the more effective our range of tools and resources are in helping schools operate in a cost-effective and culturally viable way.”



Yusuf Ali, Data Analyst

“Meaningful change starts with perspective. We help schools step back, see the full picture and move forward with clarity and purpose”



Paul Reynolds, Senior Consultant & Head of Data Strategy

Business Consultancy

With growing pressures on school finances, many schools are looking to improve their bottom lines, either by raising income or by reducing costs.

This inevitably leads to questions such as how our fee levels sit in the market, how many bursaries should we give, how does our pay compares and how high are our overheads?

Schools also want to know what is realistic in terms of generating new income from fundraising or trading. The solution? A business consultancy to shape your financial future.

OptimisEd: Staffing & Cost Optimisation

Our OptimisEd project is centred around a dynamic model integrating teaching allocations, staff costs, pupil numbers, fee levels and management accounts to provide real-time income and cost modelling based on theoretical pupil numbers, staff allocations and fee levels;

delivering the full financial picture behind a school's choice of operating model with all major cost categories benchmarked against similar independent schools.

The model also benchmarks non-staff costs such as premises, welfare and other operational overheads – helping to pinpoint any key non-staff cost drivers and targets for efficiency. OptimisEd therefore provides easy identification of a school's cost drivers and provides the benchmarked insights needed to make informed, strategic decisions about staffing, fee levels and expenditure, equipping leadership teams with the data-driven insights needed to make strategic operational decisions and build sustainable financial futures.



Curriculum Reviews that Safeguard the culture, cost and educational vision

Expert independent reviews enable progressive curricula by tackling your school's financial realities and cultural identity head-on.

Our Curriculum Review package is designed to align your curriculum with both cultural and financial priorities, ensuring the best learning outcomes for your students. As the leading financial benchmarking service in the independent sector, we are uniquely positioned to help you deliver a financially robust curriculum that meets the demands of a progressive 21st-century education while staying true to your school's

unique cultural identity. Additionally, our pioneering 360° Identity Surveys equip us with the expertise to align your curriculum with the needs and priorities of all stakeholders.

Our Curriculum Review service can be utilised alongside our other Financial and Cultural Identity packages or as a standalone service. Our team of experts are here to support you, guiding you in discussions about which areas might be charged extra for, resourced more efficiently or cut completely against the USPs you know you must protect against all else.

SMT Pay Reviews

Schools are increasingly turning to us for support in reviewing how they resource and reward their senior management teams.

A strong, well-structured SMT is essential - not just to deliver the educational vision but to drive strategic aims and respond effectively to financial and market pressures.

We often uncover challenges in this area during wider workload and pay reviews. Issues such as legacy staffing structures, disproportionate wage bills or SMT models misaligned with the school's

evolving direction are common, especially where leadership has recently changed or where a strategic shift is underway.

Our approach involves utilising our extensive data from the Teacher Pay Survey, by assessing the size, structure and cost of senior management teams. This allows us to provide clear, evidence-based advice on how SMT roles can be shaped and resourced in the context of the school's educational offering.



Cultural Services



Helping you make
informed choices through
cultural intelligence.

Teacher Pay Reviews

We combine detailed benchmarking from our Teacher Salaries & Benefits Survey with a thorough interview process to help schools build pay systems that are futuristic, financially sustainable and culturally aligned. By working closely with staff and leadership, we design bespoke structures that reflect each school's strategic goals while rewarding teachers for the value they bring across all areas of school life.

Many schools face common challenges: automatic pay progression with no clear link to contribution or impact, teachers stuck at the top of scales with limited career development, escalating allowance costs, recruitment and retention issues and legacy deals that lack transparency. Our process starts with listening. Through interviews with teaching staff, leaders and governors, we gain a clear picture of how staff want to be recognised and incentivised against the strategic values of the school. Combined with our sector-leading data, we create pay frameworks that support long-term strategy, reflect real contribution and are fully aligned with your school's financial model and unique culture.

Teacher Insights & Professional Framework Reviews

Engage teachers and drive personal development with clear pay and career pathways.

Securing teacher buy-in is a key component of our Teacher Pay Reviews. Our Teacher Insights sessions foster this buy-in by offering a platform for teachers to shape the criteria for their new pay system, grounded in their views of what 'the job' involves across all areas of school life as well as what constitutes exceptional contribution and impact. This collaborative approach ensures teachers feel valued and engaged in the process and that the shape of any new pay structure differentiates all levels of impact and can therefore pay all teachers competitively.

The Professional Framework Review, developed in collaboration with teacher working groups, creates clear pathways for career progression when integrated with the new pay scale. When paired with our Appraisal service, this comprehensive system enables schools to manage teacher pay and development effectively, ensuring individual contributions are recognised correctly and empowering teachers to drive professional growth through clarity and structure.

Effective, actionable appraisal and professional reviews that reward

Align teacher development with educational vision through innovation and implementation of a streamlined appraisal system.

“In our experience, a collaborative approach to pay reviews and appraisal designs which involves teachers, ensures buy in, trust and results in a more futuristic structure for the school.

Engaging the teaching body in this process helps them feel both valued and listened to, not only ensuring buy-in to the introduction of new systems but also an active and dynamic contribution to school development.”

**Steven Roberts,
Senior Educational
Consultant**



Any new pay structure needs a robust and effective appraisal system to ensure its success. Our Appraisal Review service, an extension of the Teacher Pay Review project, is designed to help implement a new pay structure effectively. Building on the insights gained from Teacher Insight sessions, we provide teachers with Professional Framework Reviews - developed directly from the Teacher Pay Review process. This allows teachers to reflect on their practices and make informed decisions about their professional development.

Implementing an effective appraisal system can be a challenge for schools - typically, the busiest staff members are navigating numerous responsibilities whilst attempting to manage appraisals. Our innovative approach uses coaching techniques to empower teachers, incentivising engagement and dynamically aligning with strategic objectives. We offer a comprehensive package, including policy design, targeted training for leaders and resources to support the successful implementation and monitoring of the system.

Strategy Services



Shaped by your
needs, aligned to
your structure.

“By getting underneath the unique culture of each school, we are able to put their financial data into context to inform our strategic advice.”

Bertie Collyer,
Operations Manager



STRATEGY SERVICES



360 Identity Surveys

This bespoke service is designed to give clear, evidence-based answers to your most specific and strategic questions - directly from the stakeholders and those whose views matter most.

The questions we're asked to provide answers to vary widely. Should we cut the breadth of the curriculum? Invest in new facilities? Are all parent groups aligned in what they value? Where can we improve and what should we stop doing altogether? These are complex decisions that benefit from precise, contextual insight.

360 Identity Surveys provide the solution. We work closely with you

to define the questions that need to be asked, along with the correct audiences that need to answer them. From there, we build fully tailored surveys targeting key stakeholders across your community. As all surveys are anonymous, stakeholders can speak more freely about their views, informing far clearer strategic outputs than schools would achieve doing this themselves.

Results are then analysed and presented in the context of your school's culture, strategy and financial model, giving you the clarity and confidence to successfully move forward with a clear vision and purpose.



Parental Affordability Surveys

Our Parental Affordability Surveys are run by us on your behalf in order to give you an understanding of your parental bodies.

Hosted by us, this survey asks parents' the most important and sensitive questions about their attitudes to affordability and childcare on a completely anonymous basis.

As parents feel comfortable answering these questions to a third party, we can collect information on their earnings, how they pay fees, their working lives and struggles with childcare, whose answers inform your decisions on fee structures, bursary policies, length of the school day and holiday offers.

Strategic Reviews

Bringing clarity and direction to schools facing big questions—and bigger decisions, with objective, data-led, insights for a future-focused strategy.

With increasing pressure on finances or bold strategic ambition, more schools are taking a fundamental look at their strategy. Whether it's going co-ed, ending boarding, merging, shrinking or any other strategic decisions, governors need expert, independent views they can trust to support big decisions in a fast-changing education landscape.

An all-encompassing Strategic Review is completely bias-free and combines sector expertise, sector-leading benchmarking data and a consultancy-led approach to every review. We assess the viability of every option - ensuring your decisions are financially sound, culturally appropriate, and built for long-term sustainability. No assumptions. No shortcuts. Just clear, confident direction when it matters most.

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