



The Gilbert School

Established 1912



Engage, Endeavour, Excel



Admissions

What every parent/carer needs to know



**The Gilbert School
received 1202
applications for 320
places in 2026**



**Knowing the application
process gives you the best
chance of securing your
preferred school...**



**You don't have a
choice...you have a
preference**



Every school has an admissions policy



**Every admissions policy
sets out, in order, the
criteria by which they rank
applicants**

**You will be allocated
a place in the school
where you meet the
entrance criteria more
closely than other
applicants**





1. **Looked After Children/Children in Care**
2. **Children of staff**
3. **Children who reside in the same household as a sibling in Years 7-10 at the time of application**
4. **Children eligible for Service Pupil Premium (2 places)**
5. **Children living closest to the school until 273 places are filled (based on straight line distance as measured by GPS)**
6. **Students at Boxted and Langham Primary Schools after 1-5 above have been applied (15 places shared)**
7. **32 selective places awarded in rank order of Music aptitude test score (results supplied before you submit your preferences)**

How the Local Authority (LA) allocates places



What every parent/carer needs to know

1. The LA looks at your rank order of preferences
2. It notifies each of the 6 schools you have selected that you have made a preference for them.
3. We do not know what other schools you have selected.
4. We do not know your order of preference. i.e. we don't know if we were your first or sixth or only preference.
5. We apply our admissions policy and place you in rank order e.g 1 - 1202.
6. This list is sent back to the LA



7. After the LA receives the lists back from all the schools you have selected it identifies which of your preferences you are inside the first 320 (etc) of.
8. The school that is highest on your preference that has a place is offered to you on National Offer Day
9. The schools lower down your preference are discounted.
10. Because we don't know your preference rank, some of our first 320 are actually offered higher preferences in other schools freeing up space for applicants ranked lower





11. If you are offered a lower preference school, you will automatically be added to the waiting list of any school ranked higher.
12. Waiting list positions change as applicants may accept places elsewhere. Offers are then made to those lower down the list.
13. Waiting list positions can change even the day before the beginning of term. Offers continue to be made throughout the year as places change.



The strategy?

Put your **FIRST** preference **FIRST**



*...it will not affect your
chance of gaining a
place in your reserve
preference schools*



Most common mistakes and their consequences

1. Failure to apply by the deadline



Consequence:

Even if you're a carer or live 3 yards from the school fence you will go onto a waiting list and won't be considered in the first wave of offers

All applications should be submitted by 31st October (but submitting early does not give you preferential treatment).

2. Only putting 1 school on your list



Consequence:

You may not get a place. The Local Authority will then leave your application aside until it has dealt with all the applicants who listed 6 schools. You will be allocated a place at whatever is left.

3. Only listing grammar schools



Consequence:

Your child may not achieve a sufficiently high score (the Colchester Grammars are 'super-selective'). If you must select mainly grammar schools, make sure you have an 'insurance preference'.

4. Not putting your highest preference first



Consequence:

- You could have been offered your first preference. If not, it has no impact on your chance of being offered a second or third preference school.
- Remember that even if you are offered your 4th preference, you will have gained that place over someone else who put it as their first preference.

5. Not putting The Gilbert School as first preference if your child has sat the music aptitude test.



Consequence:

Many of those sitting the aptitude test are also taking the 11+ or applying to private schools. In each year since introducing this, we have offered places to children well outside the top 32. We also maintain a separate waiting list for aptitude applicants. You can't be on it unless we were your first preference.



**Please visit our admissions officer in
the South Hall for any admissions
related queries.**

Open Morning Tours



Friday 18th September 2026 - 8.50am

Tuesday 22nd September 2026 - 8.50am

To book a place on one of our Open morning tours, please complete the MS Form found on our website under the Admissions - Open Evening tab.

Form closes **midday tomorrow** (Thursday 17th September)



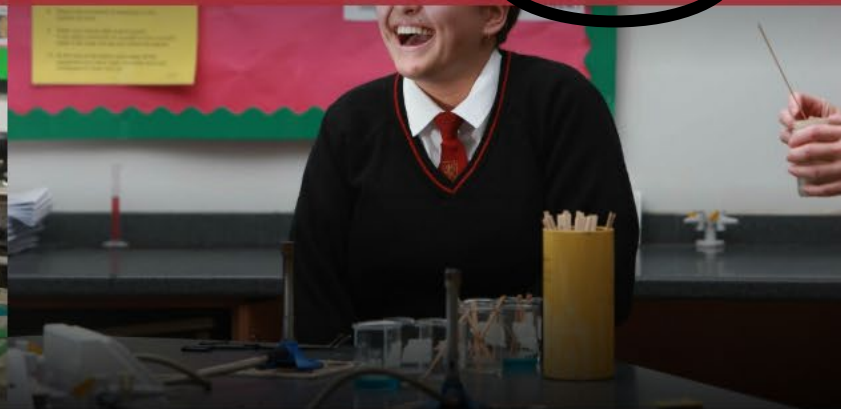
EST. 1912

The Gilberd School

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YOU ARE HERE: HOME - ADMISSIONS - OPEN EVENING

Open Evening

The Gilbert School invites prospective parents/carers of Year 5 and Year 6 children to attend our annual open evening held each September

THE GILBERD SCHOOL OPEN EVENING & SCHOOL TOURS 2026



ADMISSIONS

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Open Morning Tours

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9.00am

Tuesday 22nd September 2026
9.00am

(To book a place on one of our open morning tours, please complete the
please complete the MS Form [here](#))

Admissions, The Gilberd School, Brinkley Lane, Colchester, CO4 9PU

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