July 2026

THE EAGLE

Message from the Headteacher

Recent weeks have been particularly busy with a number of important celebrations and events. Earlier this month, we were pleased to mark the end of the secondary school journey for our Year 11 students at the Summer Ball. We also recognised the achievements of students across Years 7, 8, 9 and 10 during our Awards Evenings, where we celebrated excellence, effort and contribution to school life.

The Art, Technology, Food and Textiles Exhibition once again showcased the exceptional creativity and talent of our students in Years 9 to 11, and it was a pleasure to welcome so many parents and carers to enjoy their work. On 10th July, students from Years 7 to 11 demonstrated outstanding enthusiasm, determination and team spirit during our annual Sports Day.

The end of the Summer Term also brings the opportunity to say goodbye to colleagues who are leaving The Gilberd School. We extend our sincere thanks and best wishes to Mrs Allen, Curriculum Leader of Science, who has been a valued member of our staff for 12 years. We also say goodbye to Mrs Slater and Dr Theobald from the English and History departments respectively, together with Mr Eastbrook and Ms Fleury-Rojo from our support staff team. We thank them all for their commitment and contribution to the school community and wish them every success in the future. Though we bid a fond farewell to these staff, I am delighted to say that we remain fully staffed for September.

This week, I also had the pleasure of visiting our Year 7 students at the annual Danbury Camp. It was fantastic to see them embracing new challenges, enjoying outdoor activities and making lasting memories with their friends.

On behalf of everyone at The Gilberd School, I wish you and your families a happy, restful and enjoyable summer break.

Mr J Mitchell
Headteacher

Year 11 Leavers' Ball

Staff and students had a wonderful evening celebrating the Class of 2026 at the beautiful Stoke by Nayland Resort.

Students looked fantastic and arrived in style. They enjoyed a memorable night with friends as they marked the end of their time at The Gilberd School. The evening was filled with laughter, dancing and plenty of opportunities to celebrate together.

We were incredibly proud of how our students conducted themselves throughout the event. They were a credit to the school and helped create such a positive atmosphere for everyone in attendance.

A huge thank you to all the staff and organisers who helped make the evening possible.

As our Year 11 students now move on to the next stage of their journey, we wish them every success and happiness for the future. We hope they left with memories to treasure for years to come and will always look back fondly on their time at The Gilberd.

Please click to view photographs from The Gilberd School Year 11 Leavers' Ball.

Mrs N Burman
Head of Year 11

Years 7-10 Awards Evenings

Our Years 7–10 Awards Evenings were a wonderful opportunity to celebrate the hard work, achievement and success of our students. It was fantastic to see so many students recognised for their dedication, resilience and contribution to school life, and to share these special occasions with their families and teachers.

We were also privileged to welcome a number of inspiring Gilberd alumni who returned to speak to our students. Peter Dutch joined us for the Year 10 Awards Evening, Vicki Shreeve for Year 9, Jacob Aldons for Year 8 and Charlie Wood for Year 7. Their engaging and motivating talks highlighted the opportunities that lie ahead and encouraged our students to aim high and pursue their ambitions with confidence.

Thank you to everyone who helped make these evenings such memorable celebrations of student achievement.

Please click to view photographs from The Gilberd School 2026 Awards Evenings.

Mr P Tanton
Deputy Headteacher

Sports Day 2026

Our annual Sports Day was a tremendous success, bringing the school community together for a day of competition, teamwork and house pride. With excellent weather and a fantastic atmosphere throughout, students displayed impressive determination, resilience and sportsmanship, whether competing, officiating or cheering from the sidelines.

A special thank you goes to our Year 10 Sports Captains for their outstanding support throughout the day, and to Year 10 student Finn Colling, whose playlist helped create a wonderful festival atmosphere.

We are also very appreciative of our PE team, whose hard work ensured the event ran smoothly. We are equally grateful to our staff members who assisted with scoring, recording results, announcing events, overseeing activities and supervising students throughout the afternoon.

Most importantly, it was wonderful to see so many students embracing the occasion, supporting one another and representing their houses with pride. Sports Day was a fantastic reflection of our school values and community spirit.

Sports Day Results:
1st: Franklin – 1,649 points
2nd: Penney – 1,598 points

3rd: Holmes – 1,586 points

While Franklin won Sports Day itself, the overall Inter-House Championship for 2026, based on all house competitions across the year, was won by Penney, with Holmes second and Franklin third.

Thank you to everyone who helped make this year's Sports Day such a memorable occasion. We are already looking forward to next year.

Please click to view photographs from The Gilberd School 2026 Sports Day.

Mrs C Pharaoh
Curriculum Leader of PE

Year 8 Trip to Jimmy's Farm and Wildlife Park

Recently, our Year 8 students enjoyed an exciting combined Geography and Science trip to Jimmy's Farm and Wildlife Park, where they explored unique environments, discovered fascinating animal adaptations, and learned about a range of related careers.

A highlight of the visit was the opportunity to explore the 'Lost Lands of the Tundra', home to Europe's largest polar bear reserve and the UK's largest pack of Arctic wolves. Students were captivated by these incredible animals and gained valuable insight into how they have adapted to survive in some of the world's most challenging environments.

Throughout the day, students took part in a variety of engaging talks led by their teachers, covering different habitats, ecosystems, and animal adaptations. They also learned about the many important roles involved in running a wildlife park and farm. As part of the experience, students spoke with members of staff about the qualifications, skills, and pathways needed to work in careers linked to conservation, animal care, and environmental management.

The students represented the school exceptionally well, showing great enthusiasm, curiosity, and a genuine eagerness to develop their geographical and scientific knowledge. It was wonderful to see them asking thoughtful questions and fully engaging with all aspects of the trip.

We would like to congratulate Year 8 on their positive attitude and excellent behaviour throughout both visits.

Mr J Campbell and Mr C Barker
Teachers of Geography and Science

National School Theatre Awards

On Monday, 22nd June, members of the Performing Arts department and a group of selected students attended the National School Theatre Awards Evening, following nominations for an impressive five awards.

While we did not return with a trophy this time, we are incredibly proud to have received five NST Award nominations. Individual nominations were awarded to Emily Klarner for Best Female Solo, Hugh Henderson-Hill for Best Actor in a Musical, and Kobe Boyce for Best Supporting Actor in a Musical (all pictured above). In addition, our production was recognised with nominations for Best Ensemble and Best Musical.

These nominations reflect the dedication, talent, and commitment our students bring to the performing arts, as well as the high standards of creativity and professionalism demonstrated throughout our productions. Being shortlisted alongside other outstanding schools was a fantastic achievement in itself.

We would like to congratulate all of our cast and crew members for their hard work, enthusiasm, and teamwork, which made these nominations possible. Their efforts both on and behind the stage have been truly commendable.

Finally, our thanks go to the NSTA for hosting such an enjoyable evening and for the wonderful review of our production. We look forward to building on this success in future performances.

Mrs C Howard
Curriculum Leader of Performing Arts

CEIAG Future Friday

We were pleased to welcome the RAC to The Gilberd School to deliver an engaging CEIAG Future Friday session for our Year 8, 9 and 10 students.

The session provided valuable insight into the wide range of opportunities available within the automotive industry, including apprenticeships and technical career pathways. Students learned how these routes can lead to secure, rewarding, and progressive careers, offering excellent opportunities for professional development and strong earning potential.

We would like to thank Tony from the RAC for sharing his expertise, inspiring our Gilberdians, and helping them explore future pathways that could lead to fulfilling and successful careers.

We are proud to have welcomed a wide range of employers to The Gilberd School throughout this academic year, providing students with meaningful encounters with the world of work. We look forward to continuing to expand our CEIAG community and welcome other employers who would like to get involved. For more information, please email careers@gilberd.com.

Mr R Samjawon
Assistant Headteacher

Active Essex Year 9 Leadership Training

A group of our Year 9 students recently attended the Active Essex Leadership Training Programme at the Northern Gateway, where they spent the day developing valuable leadership skills and gaining experience in leading others.

Throughout the programme, students explored effective communication techniques and learned how to plan and deliver activities that are safe, enjoyable, and engaging for participants. The training provided an excellent opportunity to build confidence, teamwork, and organisational skills while developing a greater understanding of what makes an effective leader.

In the afternoon, students put their new skills into practice by leading activities for one another. They rose to the challenge brilliantly, demonstrating enthusiasm, professionalism, and strong leadership qualities as they planned and delivered sessions for their peers.

The group represented The Gilberd School exceptionally well and received outstanding feedback from the training provider, who described them as the best cohort they had worked with in a long time. Their positive attitude, maturity, and willingness to embrace new challenges made a lasting impression and ensured the day was a great success.

We are incredibly proud of their achievements and look forward to seeing them continue to develop these skills both in school and beyond. Well done to all involved!

Miss S Theobald
Teacher of PE

Fundraising for St Helena Hospice

Students recently took part in a fundraising challenge for St

Helena Hospice, using an initial £20 investment to see how much they could raise.

Showing impressive creativity and enterprise, students organised a range of activities including an ice lolly sale, art competition, services raffle, a 300km run, and the popular *Guess the Number of Sweets* and *Guess the Name of the Toy* competitions. Together, they raised over £1,000 for the charity.

A special thank you to Highwoods Tesco and staff from Chesterwell East of England Co-op for their generous donations to the ice lolly sale, which helped make the event such a success.

We are incredibly proud of the initiative, teamwork and community spirit demonstrated throughout the challenge.

Also supporting St Helena Hospice, Year 8 student Louise Warwick independently took part in the charity's Pier to Pier challenge in May. Louise completed the full 14-mile walk in an impressive 5 hours and 30 minutes, raising an outstanding

£439 for the Hospice.

Congratulations to Louise on this fantastic achievement and for her dedication to supporting such an important local charity.

Mrs J Clark
Lead Teacher of Leadership

Sporting Achievements

We are delighted to celebrate the achievements of three Year 8 students who have recently enjoyed success in their chosen sports.

Holly Grant produced an excellent performance at the Essex County Gymnastics Grade Competition, winning silver medals in Floor, Vault and Bars. Her results have earned her a place at the regional competition, and we wish her every success.

Meanwhile, George Vinter has enjoyed a successful season in Water Polo, representing both the East Region and East Talent Centre in national competitions. He helped his team secure three victories at the Talent Centre Games in Manchester and went on to represent the East Region at the Inter-Regional Championships, where the team achieved an impressive 4th place finish.

Georgina Batt has achieved her First Dahn Black Belt in Kuk Sool Won, a traditional Korean martial art she has trained in since the age of eight. She also finished 4th in both Staff Spinning and Forms at a recent European championship.

These achievements are a reflection of the hard work, commitment and determination shown by all three students. Congratulations to Holly, George and Georgina. We are very proud of their success.

Congratulations to Year 10 student Louie Pocock, who has been signed by Colchester United FC on a contract for the 2026–27 season, with the opportunity to progress towards a two-year scholarship.

This is a fantastic milestone and reflects the commitment, perseverance and ability Louie has shown throughout his football journey.

We are delighted to celebrate this achievement and wish Louie every success as he takes this exciting next step with Colchester United. Well done, Louie.

We are delighted to celebrate the outstanding achievement of Year 10 student and Head Boy, Jacob Narhkom, who recently competed at the English Schools Athletics Championships.

Representing Essex in the Intermediate Boys' 400m, Jacob delivered an exceptional performance, securing 2nd place overall.

He has now been selected to represent England at the Schools International Athletic Board (SIAB) Track and Field international competition in Belfast on Saturday, 18th July.

What an incredible achievement demonstrating Jacob's hard work, commitment and passion for Athletics.

We are all extremely proud of him and wish him the very best of luck as he competes for England. Well done Jacob!

These achievements are just some of the many sporting successes celebrated at The Gilberd School this year. From British champions in Karate, Judo and Kuk Sool Won, to county-level success in Gymnastics, Trampolining, Water Polo and Swimming, Gilberd students have demonstrated exceptional talent, dedication and perseverance across a wide range of sports. We have also celebrated athletes competing on the international stage in Cheerleading and Athletics, highlighting the breadth and depth of sporting achievement within our school community.

We are incredibly proud of all our students and look forward to celebrating many more successes in the year ahead.

Mrs C Pharaoh, Mr A Hursey & the PE Department
Curriculum Leader of PE, Assistant Curriculum Leader of PE

"Love Jumbo" Street Art Project

We are pleased to share Year 8 student Monroe D'Cruz-Clarke's success in the Love Jumbo Street Art Project.

Monroe was selected as one of only 12 young people to participate in the 12-week programme, which offered the opportunity to develop artistic techniques while learning about street art and artists from around the world. The project was delivered by The Minories in partnership with local street artist Paul Cottie.

The programme concluded with a live art event at the Love Jumbo Festival on 27th June, where participants created and displayed their final pieces outside the Mercury Theatre.

As a lasting legacy of the project, Monroe's artwork, along with that of the other young artists, will be exhibited around the Jumbo Water Tower, making a valuable contribution to the local community.

This is a fantastic achievement and highlights Monroe's creativity, dedication and enthusiasm for the arts.

We are very proud of him and look forward to seeing what he accomplishes next.

Mrs N Sayer-Schofield
Curriculum Leader of Technology

Recently, a group of our Year 9 Drama Extra students had the opportunity to perform at the Mercury Theatre as part of TheatreFest, alongside students from five other local schools.

The students devised and performed an original piece inspired by music from the 1960s, reflecting themes from the Mercury Theatre's recent production of *Caroline – A New Musical*.

The day included a technical rehearsal, live performances, and the chance to watch and learn from the work of students from other schools. It was a valuable and enjoyable experience for everyone involved.

Our students represented the school brilliantly and delivered a confident and engaging performance. Well done to all who took part. We look forward to future TheatreFest opportunities.

Mrs C Howard
Curriculum Leader of Performing Arts

Combined Cadet Force Summer Camp

CCF Summer Camp 2026 provided an excellent opportunity for cadets to develop their leadership, teamwork, and personal resilience through a diverse programme of challenging and rewarding activities. Throughout the week, cadets were encouraged to step outside their comfort zones, take on new responsibilities and support one another in a variety of testing environments.

The cadets created lasting memories with experiences such as firing live ammunition on a range, a competition day, field craft including creating and staying in a harbour area, as well as personal development activities on the high ropes and kayaking on a lake. These activities helped to develop confidence, independence and valuable life skills, while also strengthening friendships and teamwork.

The camp was a demanding but highly rewarding experience, and we are proud of everything our cadets achieved during this challenging week away.

Captain M Blofield
Contingent Commander

Year 7 Geography Waterfall Competition

Congratulations to our Year 7 Geography students, who recently showcased their learning through the creation of some fantastic waterfall models.

The standard of work produced was extremely impressive, with students demonstrating a great deal of creativity, effort and attention to detail. Using a variety of materials and innovative design ideas, they brought key geographical features to life and showed an excellent understanding of how waterfalls are formed.

It was wonderful to see such enthusiasm and imagination on display, and the finished models reflected the hard work and dedication that students had put into the project.

Well done to all of our Year 7 Geographers on producing such a superb collection of work!

Mrs J Clark
Teacher of Geography

Bite Back Success

It has been another successful year for The Gilberd School Bite Back team, whose hard work and determination have led to a number of positive changes across the school.

Following a successful campaign, the team secured funding for new water fountains, which have now been installed and are already benefiting students throughout the school.

More recently, team members met with representatives from the local council and the National Healthy Schools team to showcase their achievements and discuss future projects and priorities for the year ahead.

We are incredibly proud of the commitment, initiative and leadership shown by the Bite Back team. Their efforts have made a real difference to our school community, and we look forward to seeing what they accomplish next. Well done to everyone involved!

Discover more about this fantastic achievement by reading the full article on the Colchester City Council website.

Ms M Hollands
Lead Teacher of Bite Back

Year 10 Boys' Football District Champions

We are delighted to celebrate the success of The Gilberd School Year 10 Football Team, who were crowned Colchester and Tendring District Champions following an impressive 5–1 victory over Manningtree High School in the final.

Despite falling behind early in the match, the team responded brilliantly. Stefan Cotiata levelled the score before Louie Pocock netted twice to put Gilberd firmly in control. Malachy Browne added a fourth goal with a well-worked finish, before Harry Webster completed the scoring to secure an outstanding win.

This achievement is the result of a season of hard work, commitment and teamwork. Every player has contributed to the team's success, consistently representing the school with dedication and sportsmanship.

Congratulations to the entire squad on a fantastic season and a well-deserved championship title.

We are very proud of all they have achieved.

Mr A Hursey
Assistant Curriculum Leader of PE

Recycling and Sustainability

We were delighted to welcome Councillor Martin Goss to The Gilberd School, where he had the opportunity to see first-hand the fantastic recycling and sustainability initiatives taking place across the school under the leadership of Mr Dennis.

The visit provided an excellent chance for students to showcase their commitment to environmental responsibility and share the positive impact their work is having within our school community. We are incredibly proud of the enthusiasm and dedication they continue to demonstrate in supporting a more sustainable future.

Mrs N Sayer-Schofield
Curriculum Leader of Technology

The Gilberd School Summer Concert 2026

At the end of June, students showcased their musical talents at our Summer Concert, held on one of the hottest days of the year. Despite the soaring temperatures, performers delivered an entertaining and varied programme, featuring music from *Chicken Run* to *Pirates of the Caribbean* and much more.

The concert also provided an opportunity to celebrate several Year 11 students who have been involved in every school concert since joining The Gilberd in Year 7. We would like to thank them for their dedication and commitment to the Music Department over the years and wish them every success for the future.

It was a fantastic evening of music-making and a wonderful way to round off another successful year. We are already looking forward to our Winter Concert.

Mrs C Howard

Silver Duke of Edinburgh Expedition

At the end of June, following their exam celebrations, our Silver Duke of Edinburgh cohort headed to Bentley Copse in the beautiful Surrey Hills for their Silver Expedition. Over three days and two nights, students challenged themselves by navigating and exploring the local area while demonstrating the resilience, teamwork and determination that the award is designed to develop.

Despite temperatures reaching an incredible 35°C, our fantastic Year 11 students were undeterred. They successfully completed their expedition journeys and impressed everyone with the quality of their Silver presentations on their return.

The expedition was not just about walking and navigation; there was plenty of fun to be had back at camp too. From toasting marshmallows around the campfire to team games that continued long into the evening, the students made the most of every moment.
They even managed to persuade the teachers to join in with the evening entertainment!

The students were truly phenomenal throughout the expedition, displaying outstanding perseverance and positivity in exceptionally challenging conditions. We are incredibly proud of everything they achieved and the way they supported one another throughout the experience. It was a memorable expedition and a fitting achievement for such an excellent group of students.

Mrs E Watts
Duke of Edinburgh Team

Year 7 and 8 Onatti Theatre Company Performance

Our Year 7 and 8 French students had a fantastic opportunity recently as we welcomed the Onatti Theatre Company for a lively performance of their play *R.S.V.P.* The play brought plenty of laughter and excitement, with students fully engaged throughout.

A special thank you to our students who volunteered to take part. They were brilliant on stage after being chosen to take part in several scenes – *formidable!*

Mrs R Gailey
Curriculum Leader of Modern Foreign Languages

Stay Connected with The Gilberd School

We're always keen to keep our school community informed, engaged, and connected. One of the best ways to do this is through our social media channels.

By following us online, parents, carers, students, and the wider community can stay up to date with the latest news, events, and achievements, as well as gain a real insight into daily life at The Gilberd School. We also share careers guidance, trips, guest speakers, and key milestones throughout the year.

We'd love for you to join our growing online community. You can find us on:

Facebook: www.facebook.com/Gilberdschool

Instagram: @thegilberdschoolofficial

Be sure to like, follow, and share our posts to help us celebrate the fantastic work of our students and staff.

Share your good news with us! Email newsletter@gilberd.com with any student achievements, celebrations or success stories. We'd be delighted to highlight them.

The School Office

Update your details please...

To help us keep communication smooth and to ensure that you receive all important updates, please take a moment to check that we have your most up-to-date contact details. If you have recently changed your telephone number, email address, or home address, or if any emergency contact information needs updating, please let the school office know as soon as possible via admin@gilberd.com. Keeping our records accurate helps us stay connected and respond quickly, whenever needed.

Thank you for your support.

The School Office

Careers and Alumni

Join our CEIAG Community! We are calling Gilberd Alumni and employers to be part of our careers provision at The Gilberd School to inspire our students and contribute to our Careers programme. If you would like to be involved in events, work with our students and/or want to know more, please contact careers@gilberd.com.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Dates for your diary

Year 11 GCSE Results Day
Thursday 20th August (9.30 - 11.00)

Year 10 RE Short Course GCSE Results Collection
Thursday 20th August (11.30 - 12.30)

Inset Days
Tuesday 1st and Wednesday 2nd September
Wednesday 7th October

First Day of Autumn Term for ALL students
Thursday 3rd September
Years 7-9 & Year 11 Mentors - 08.40 start
Years 10 & 11 - 09.50 start

School Photographs
Year 7 - Tuesday 8th September
Year 11 Panoramic - Monday 21st September
Years 8-11 - Wednesday 14th October

Year 10 Work Experience
Information Evening - Wednesday 9th September

Open Evening
Wednesday 16th September

Freshers Fayre
Years 7 & 8 - Thursday 17th September

Open Day Tours
Friday 18th September
Tuesday 22nd September

Year 6 Events
Musical Aptitude Admissions Deadline - Thursday 24th September
Music Aptitude Tests - w/c 5th October

Year 7 Information Evening
Wednesday 30th September

Year 10 Assessment Weeks
W/c 12th and w/c 19th October

Year 11 Information and Careers Evening
Wednesday 14th October

Year 11 MFL Mock Oral Exams
W/c 19th October

Flu Vaccinations
Y7, Y8, Y9 - Thursday 22nd October