



THE EAGLE

Message from the Headteacher

Despite the cold and endless rain, February has been a very busy month in the school calendar, with many trips and activities having taken place. Several of these are outlined below.

Our school show this year, Les Misérables, ran for five sell-out nights before the half term break. It was also performed to over 250 Year 6 students from many of our local primary schools. Once again, the standard of the show was exceptional. We have been inundated with messages, including the following from one audience member: "I felt an overwhelming pride in the students after watching last night's performance. The dedication, talent and hard work that went in was amazing, it felt like a professional theatre performance". Congratulations to the Performing Arts team and everyone involved, both on stage and behind the scenes, who made the show such a success; we are immensely proud of you all and know that the memories of this experience will stay with you for years to come.

It has been pleasing to see many of our students further develop their cultural experience through several theatre performances this academic year, with more planned. The experience is further enhanced when one of the performers happens to be an ex-Gilberdian, as was the case with a recent Year 11 theatre trip to Norwich to see "Dear England" with Liam Prince-Donnelly who happened to play Enjolras when we last performed Les Misérables!



LIAM PRINCE-DONNELLY

Likewise, it is always a pleasure to hear of the wide range of musical opportunities our Gilberdians get to experience. Further details about music tuition can be found below in this edition of The Eagle, along with a link to our most up to date co-curricular offer.

Mr J Mitchell
Headteacher

Jack Petchey Workshops

We are delighted to share that 60 of our Year 10 students took part in an exciting Jack Petchey workshop, where they developed their public speaking, teamwork, and leadership skills.

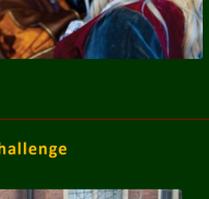
The students engaged brilliantly throughout the day and showed real confidence and creativity in their presentations.

Congratulations to all who took part, and best of luck to our finalists as they prepare for the next round.

Miss L Yates
Oracy Co-ordinator



Kew Garden Photograph Competition Winners



Congratulations to all Year 9 Geography students who entered this year's Kew Gardens photographic competition.

The students' entries were very impressive, with their images capturing everything from delicate botanical details to sweeping garden landscapes and an appreciation of the modern sculptures found around the grounds.

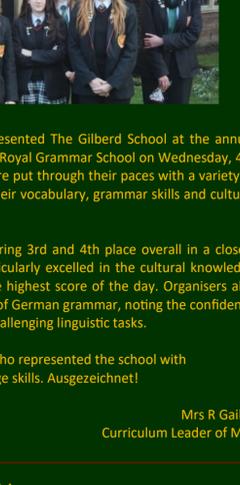
1st prize was awarded to Jenson Kerry 9YLBW, 2nd prize to Sophie Leah English 9YLBW and 3rd prize to Eliza Vernitski 9YSBU.

Tilly Cock 9XMQS and Michael Martinho 9YSBU were both highly commended.

Mrs J Clark
Lead Teacher of Foundation Studies

Year 7 Theatre Trip to Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet

On Thursday, 5th February the English Department took 40 year 7 Gilberdians to see a production of Romeo and Juliet at the West Cliff Theatre in Clacton-on-Sea.

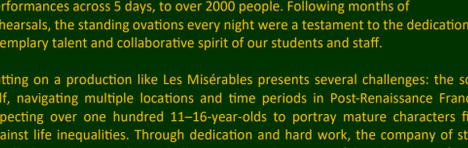


This live performance was an opportunity for year 7 students to see how Shakespeare translates from page to stage.

As usual, we received praise from the theatre, as well as an email from a member of the public, commenting on the exemplary behaviour of our students.

Ms S Tadman
Lead Teacher of English

Year 11 Shine at German Language Challenge



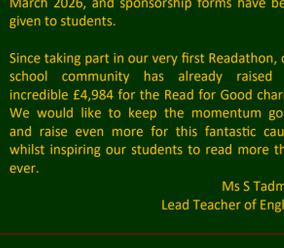
A group of enthusiastic Year 11 students represented The Gilberd School at the annual German Language Challenge held at Colchester Royal Grammar School on Wednesday, 4th February. Throughout the afternoon, teams were put through their paces with a variety of fun and fast-paced activities designed to test their vocabulary, grammar skills and cultural knowledge.

Both Gilberd teams performed brilliantly, securing 3rd and 4th place overall in a closely contested competition. One of our teams particularly excelled in the cultural knowledge round, earning a special prize for achieving the highest score of the day. Organisers also praised our students for their impressive grasp of German grammar, noting the confidence and accuracy they demonstrated in the more challenging linguistic tasks.

It was a fantastic experience for the students, who represented the school with enthusiasm, teamwork and outstanding language skills. Ausgezeichnet!

Mrs R Gailey
Curriculum Leader of MFL

School Production of Les Misérables



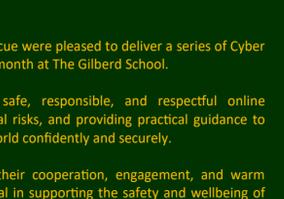
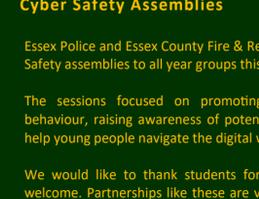
This month the Performing Arts Department, with the support of many colleagues, was incredibly proud to present the annual musical production of 'Les Misérables' with 6 performances across 5 days, to over 2000 people. Following months of rehearsals, the standing ovations every night were a testament to the dedication, exemplary talent and collaborative spirit of our students and staff.

Putting on a production like Les Misérables presents several challenges: the score itself, navigating multiple locations and time periods in Post-Renaissance France and expecting over one hundred 11–16-year-olds to portray mature characters fighting against life inequalities. Through dedication and hard work, the company of students excelled at taking on these challenges to produce powerful authentic performances which both moved and amazed audiences.

It has been a privilege to work with this company of Gilberdians and witness their growth in confidence and support for each other. Our year 11s were outstanding role-models, both in their performances and work ethic, supporting the ethos of the Arts to ensure that all students felt part of something they were proud of; this was certainly seen in the true ensemble feeling created on stage.

We would like to send an enormous thank you to everyone involved in this production, making it one to remember.

Mrs C Howard
Curriculum Leader of Performing Arts

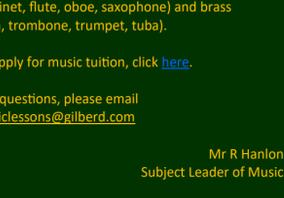


Just a few of the many comments received regarding our school production of Les Misérables:

"A truly outstanding performance from all."

"Completely blown away by the sheer professionalism of the whole production."

"What a credit the students are to their families and school."

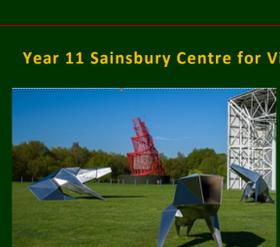


National Year of Reading 2026



2026 is the National Year of Reading. We have a fabulous library, staffed by Mrs Jenkins, our full time librarian and a team of student librarians. To celebrate the start of the National Year of Reading, all students in Years 7-9 are invited to take part in our school Readathon.

Full details have been emailed to Parents and Carers. The Readathon runs from today until 4th March 2026, and sponsorship forms have been given to students.



Since taking part in our very first Readathon, our school community has already raised an incredible £4,984 for the Read for Good charity. We would like to keep the momentum going and raise even more for this fantastic cause, whilst inspiring our students to read more than ever.

Ms S Tadman
Lead Teacher of English

Year 7 and 8 Onatt Theatre Company Performance

Our Year 7 and 8 German students had a wonderful cultural and linguistic experience this month as we welcomed the Onatt Theatre Company for a lively performance of Das Gruselhaus!

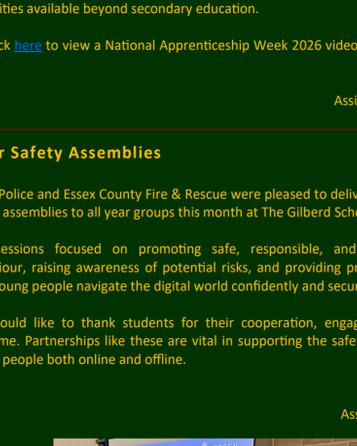
The play brought plenty of laughter and excitement, with students fully engaged throughout. A special mention goes to Year 7 students Daniel and Liberty, who were chosen to take part in several scenes; they were both "fantastisch!"

We look forward to hosting Onatt again in the summer term, when they will return to perform a French play for our Y1 population students.

Mrs R Gailey
Curriculum Leader of MFL



National Apprenticeship Week—Suffolk New College Visit



As part of National Apprenticeship Week, we were delighted to welcome Suffolk New College to The Gilberd School.

Suffolk New College hosted a well-attended drop-in session for students from all year groups, providing a valuable insight into a wide range of post-16 pathways and apprenticeships. In addition, Suffolk New College delivered an informative and engaging assembly to our Year 10 students, offering Gilberdians support as they begin to explore their future options.

We would like to extend our thanks to Suffolk New College for their time and expertise, and for helping our students broaden their understanding of the opportunities available beyond secondary education.

Please click [here](#) to view a National Apprenticeship Week 2026 video from Suffolk New College.

Mr R Samjawn
Assistant Headteacher

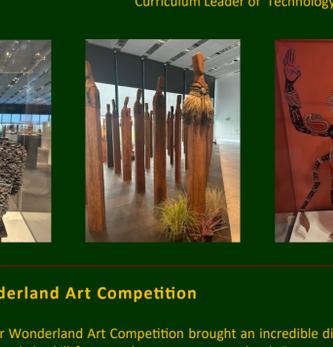
Cyber Safety Assemblies

Essex Police and Essex County Fire & Rescue were delighted to deliver a series of Cyber Safety assemblies to all year groups this month at The Gilberd School.

The sessions focused on promoting safe, responsible, and respectful online behaviour, raising awareness of potential risks, and providing practical guidance to help young people navigate the digital world confidently and securely.

We would like to thank students for their cooperation, engagement, and warm welcome. Partnerships like these are vital in supporting the safety and wellbeing of young people both online and offline.

Mr R Samjawn
Assistant Headteacher

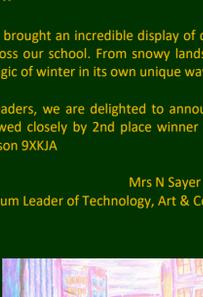


Update your details please...

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

Year 11 Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts in Norwich

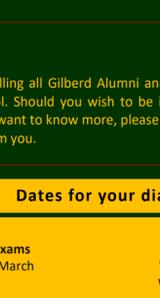


Earlier this month, our Year 11 GCSE Art students enjoyed an inspiring and thought-provoking visit to the Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts in Norwich. The trip formed a key part of their GCSE preparation, giving students the chance to explore artworks firsthand and deepen their understanding of how artists use materials, form, and cultural context to express ideas.

A highlight was the opportunity to sketch in the galleries. Many students produced observational drawings and notes that will directly feed into their coursework portfolios. Staff at the Sainsbury Centre also commented on how focused and polite our students were throughout the day.

We are incredibly proud of how Year 11 conducted themselves and excited to see how this experience will shape their upcoming work.

Mrs N Sayer Schofield
Curriculum Leader of Technology, Art & Computing

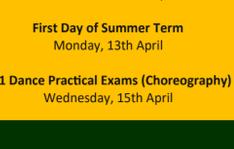
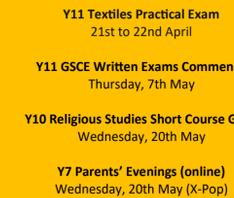


Winter Wonderland Art Competition

This year's Winter Wonderland Art Competition brought an incredible display of creativity, imagination, and artistic skill from students across our school. From snowy landscapes to festive scenes, each submission captured the magic of winter in its own unique way.

After some very difficult judging by our Art Leaders, we are delighted to announce that Maya Pawlowski in 7YDSN won 1st prize, followed closely by 2nd place winner Charlotte Pang 8YTWH and 3rd place winner Quinn Jenkinson 9XKJA

Mrs N Sayer Schofield
Curriculum Leader of Technology, Art & Computing



Co-Curricular Provision

Information on our co-curricular programme can be found [here](#).

Careers and Alumni

Join our CEIAG Community. Calling all Gilberd Alumni and employers to be part of our careers provision at The Gilberd School. Should you wish to be involved in events this academic year, working with our students and want to know more, please contact careers@gilberd.com. We look forward to hearing from you.

Dates for your diary

Y11 MFL Mock Oral Exams
23rd February to 2nd March

Y8 Parents' Evenings (online)
Wednesday, 15th April (X-Pop)
Wednesday, 22nd April (Y-Pop)

Assessment Weeks
23rd February to 6th March (Y10)
w/c 16th March (Y11)

Y11 MFL Oral Exams
16th to 20th April
27th to 29th April

Y11 Drama Practical Exams
2nd to 3rd March

Assessment Weeks
20th April to 1st May (Y7)
11th to 22nd May (Y8)

Y11 Core Mock Exams
w/c 9th March

Y11 Art Exam
21st to 22nd April

Y9 Parents' Evenings (face-to-face)
Wednesday, 11th March (X-Pop)
Wednesday, 25th March (Y-Pop)

Y11 Textiles Practical Exam
21st to 22nd April

Y10 Work Experience
w/c 9th March (X-Pop)
w/c 16th March (Y-Pop)

Y11 GSCE Written Exams Commence
Thursday, 7th May

Y11 Music Solo Performances
w/c 23rd March

Y10 Religious Studies Short Course GCSE
Wednesday, 20th May

Last Day of Spring Term
Friday, 27th March

Y7 Parents' Evenings (online)
Wednesday, 20th May (X-Pop)
Wednesday, 3rd June (Y-Pop)

Easter Holidays
30th March to 10th April

May Half Term
25th to 29th May

First Day of Summer Term
Monday, 13th April

Y11 Dance Practical Exams (Choreography)
Wednesday, 15th April