



THE EAGLE

Message from the Headteacher

As we move towards the Easter break, it has been a busy time for Year 11 students. They have completed another set of core mock exams to support their preparations for the final examination series in the summer, as well as undertaking practical examinations and the completion of NEAs (Non Exam Assessments) and coursework in some subjects. Other year groups have assessment weeks scheduled at various times throughout the school year; our calendar and emails home will keep you abreast of the exact details, so please do check these regularly and ensure that we have your correct email address recorded.

In our ever advancing technological age, it is heartening to see so many of our Gilbertians embrace, and excel in, more traditional activities like chess, spelling competitions, mathematical problem solving challenges, poetry writing and reading. We had a record number of staff embrace the spirit of World Book Day by dressing up in an array of much loved book character costumes. You can read more about The Gilbert School's World Book Day activities, many of which were led by our students, below.

This month we had the pleasure of conducting formal interviews with Year 10 Gilbertians who applied for senior student leadership positions. As always, the performance of our students was exceptional, reflecting their commitment, preparation and enthusiasm. An update on the wider leadership opportunities across the school is outlined below. Year 10 have also been engaged with their week-long work experience placements. We will share further details in the next issue of The Eagle.

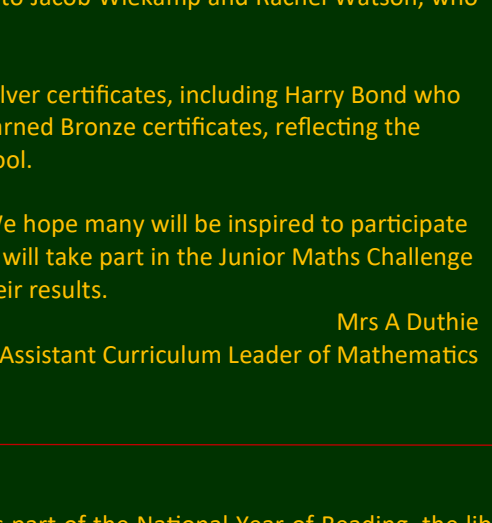
As we move towards the Summer Term, our programme of co-curricular activities will change. Please take a look at the delivery map and encourage your child to get involved in some of the many activities that are on offer at The Gilbert. A link to the programme always appears at the bottom of the newsletter each month.

We wish you a very pleasant Easter break and look forward to the summer months ahead.

Mr J Mitchell
Headteacher

St Mary's Speaking Competition

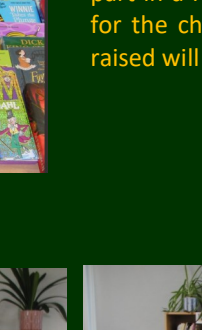
We are extremely proud of three of our Year 9 Gilbertians who took part in the St Mary's speaking competition earlier this month. Well done to Pearl Ikpele, Chinyere William and Imran Ikram and for crafting and delivering fantastic speeches on the topic: "Are we putting too much pressure on teenagers to plan their future too early?"



A special congratulations goes to Chinyere, who was awarded Best Speaker.

Miss L Yates
Teacher of English
Oracy Co-ordinator

UKMT Intermediate Maths Challenge 2026



A total of 92 Gilbertians from Years 9-11 took part in this year's UKMT Intermediate Maths Challenge, marking our highest level of participation to date.

We are delighted to celebrate a number of outstanding achievements. Four students were awarded Gold certificates and qualified for the next round, the Pink Kangaroo Challenge in March: William Michaels - Best in School, William Oliver, Melih Yucel and Sherise Lui - Best in Year. Congratulations to Jacob Wiekamp and Rachel Watson, who also achieved Gold awards.

A further eleven students were awarded Silver certificates, including Harry Bond who achieved Best in Year, while 28 students earned Bronze certificates, reflecting the strong mathematical ability across the school.

Well done to all students who took part. We hope many will be inspired to participate again next year. Our Year 7 and 8 students will take part in the Junior Maths Challenge in April, and we look forward to sharing their results.

Mrs A Duthie
Assistant Curriculum Leader of Mathematics

World Book Day in the Library



As part of the National Year of Reading, the library was a hub of activity on World Book Day. Students shared their written book reviews on the library screen and took part in a range of competitions, including designing a library logo, reimagining a book cover, and writing a book review. Judges were impressed by the high quality of entries.



Staff, student librarians and reading leaders joined in by dressing as book characters, while students enjoyed a prize draw to guess the librarian's costume. Our student librarians also successfully organised a book swap stall.



Over 400 World Book Day titles were available, alongside many books generously donated by students and staff. These proved extremely popular, with very few remaining by the end of the day.



In addition, students in Years 7-9 have been taking part in a Readathon sponsored read to raise funds for the charity Read for Good. The total amount raised will be shared shortly.

Mrs C Jenkins
Librarian

World Book Day 2026

World Book Day at The Gilbert was a fabulous celebration, especially fitting during the National Year of Reading.

Gilbert staff, reading leaders and librarians embraced the day by dressing up as characters from a wide range of much-loved books. The ever-popular "Guess who is reading..." competition returned, delighting students as they tried to identify the teachers hidden behind their favourite books.

Our whole-school 'Story Over a Day' featured the gothic classic The Tell-Tale Heart by Edgar Allan Poe, with Gilbertians eagerly awaiting each new instalment during their lessons.

We hope the positive atmosphere and fabulous costumes on display inspire our students to pick up a book and read!

Ms S Tadman
Lead Teacher of English



First Gilbert Chess Fixture

This month, The Gilbert Chess Team took part in their first chess fixture, competing in a friendly match against The Trinity School. Although the team lost 5-1, our students represented the school with confidence, resilience and excellent sportsmanship throughout.

We are proud of their commitment and enthusiasm and look forward to seeing them compete again in the Summer Term.

Mrs J Farrell
Teacher of English and Chess Club Lead



Art Competition Submissions - The Royal Academy of Arts



The Royal Academy of Arts hosts an annual competition inviting young artists to submit original artwork accompanied by a short written description. Selected entries are showcased either in the online summer exhibition or displayed at the Royal Academy in London.

We received an impressive range of submissions this year and are delighted to share a selection of these high-quality and creative pieces. We wish all of our young artists the very best of luck in the competition.

Miss R Elliott
Teacher of Art

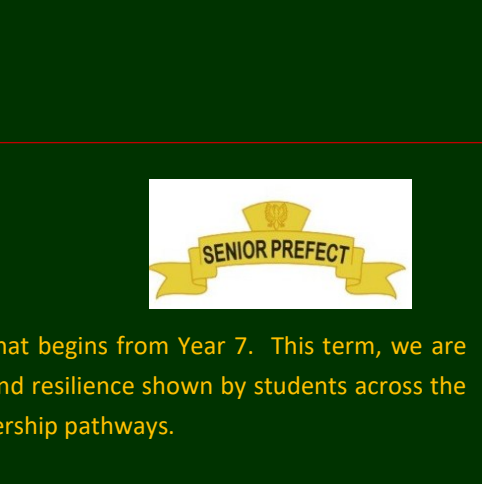
Visit to Direct Seafoods Colchester

GCSE Food and Nutrition

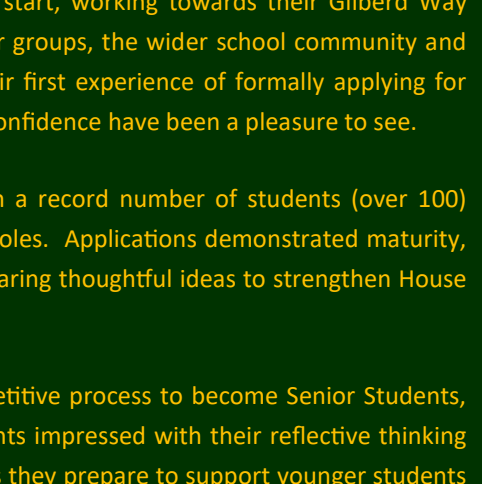
On 4th March, a group of Year 10 GCSE Food and Nutrition students visited Direct Seafoods, Colchester to take part in a valuable hands-on learning experience hosted by ex-Gilbertian Ruby Morris.



Students took part in an identification challenge, using images of different fish, followed by a guided tour of the cold rooms. They observed how fresh fish is stored, scaled, filleted and portioned, gaining a clear insight into professional food preparation practices.

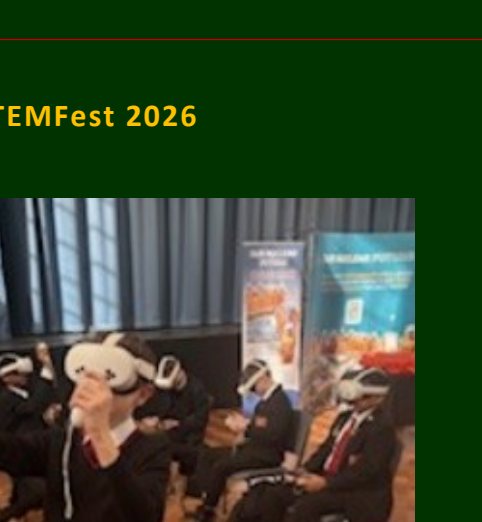


Throughout the visit, students engaged with enthusiasm. They enjoyed handling, discussing and tasting a variety of fish and were particularly impressed by an expert filleter, who demonstrated highly skilled fishmonger techniques. Students even had the opportunity to hold a live lobster!

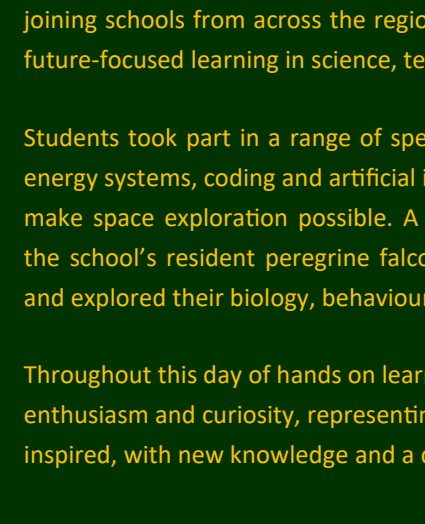


Thank you to Direct Seafoods, Colchester for hosting us.

Ms M Hollands
Teacher of Food Technology



Year 11 English Theatre Trip to Jekyll and Hyde

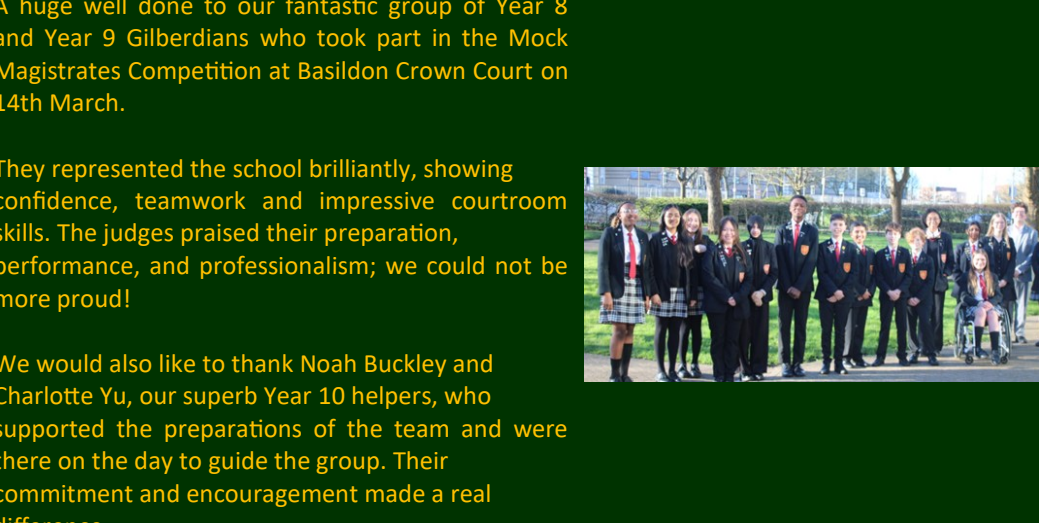


On 25th February, the English Department ran another exciting theatre trip for our Year 11 students to watch a production of Jekyll and Hyde at The Palace Theatre in Southend on Sea.

As a current GCSE text, this provided our students with an opportunity to consolidate their understanding of a complex novella. It was a very good production too!

Miss L Yates
Teacher of English

The Rotary Club Young



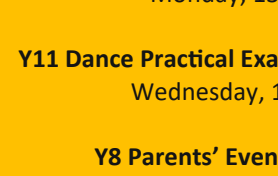
Fourteen talented Gilbertians from Years 7 - 10 were selected as finalists, after submitting creative writing inspired by the theme 'Happiness in Nature'. The students were invited to attend an awards ceremony on 27th February at Christ Church, Lexden.

We are extremely proud that four students received awards in the finalist categories, with a further seven students being commended or highly commended for the quality of their work.

Haneefa Hussain, Year 8 was awarded 1st place in the Intermediate category, while Ellie Briggs, Year 10 achieved runner-up in the Senior category. Well done, Year 8, for representing The Gilbert School so well.

This represents a significant achievement for our students, and both Maisie's and Haneefa's winning pieces will now be forwarded to the district-level competition.

Congratulations to all Gilbertians involved in this outstanding success.



Ms S Tadman
Lead Teacher of English

Spelling Bee Competition 2026

On 27th of February the English Department ran a Year 7 Spelling Bee. Fourteen Gilbertians competed for 1st, 2nd and 3rd place in a very tense competition. The students had worked hard, memorising some very difficult spellings from a large word bank.



Our Spelling Bee Winner, Felicia Obi, managed to spell an impressive eighteen complex words correctly in a minute!

Ms S Tadman
Lead Teacher of English

Essex Life Magazine Mothers' Day Poetry Competition

One of the many co-curricular opportunities available for Gilbertians each week is our Creative Writing Club.

We are delighted to share that four students who attend this activity; Archie Roxburgh, Diamond-Pearl Maddox, Sahitya Vislavath and Haneefa Hussain have recently won a Mothers' Day poetry writing competition.

The poetry competition invited Essex young people to send in a poem celebrating their mum or the person who is like a mother to them. Their poems have been published in the March edition of Essex Life Magazine.

This is a fabulous achievement!

Ms S Tadman
Lead Teacher of English

Year 8 Hollywood Bowl Trip

Year 8 enjoyed a fantastic evening at Hollywood Bowl earlier this month, mixing friendly competition with plenty of laughs.

Alongside some impressive bowling, the arcade proved to be popular. The punch machine quickly became the main attraction, with students eagerly challenging each other to beat the high score.

Jacob and Mason showed off their impressive moves on the dance mat, drawing a small crowd with their enthusiasm, while Ali took to the pool table for a brilliant match against Mr Shave.

It was a great trip full of energy, teamwork and memorable moments. Well done, Year 8, for representing The Gilbert School so well.

Mr M Wilby
Head of Year 8

A Community of Emerging Leaders

At The Gilbert School, leadership is a journey that begins from Year 7. This term, we are proud to celebrate the ambition, commitment and resilience shown by students across the school as they take important steps in their leadership pathways.

Our Year 7 students have made an impressive start, working towards their Gilbert Way Bronze Award by contributing positively to tutor groups, the wider school community and enrichment opportunities. For many, this is their first experience of formally applying for recognition, and their enthusiasm and growing confidence have been a pleasure to see.

Leadership continues to flourish in Year 9, with a record number of students (over 100) applying for House Captain and Sports Captain roles. Applications demonstrated maturity, teamwork and creativity, with many students sharing thoughtful ideas to strengthen House spirit and community engagement.

In Year 10, students took part in a highly competitive process to become Senior Students, including Senior Prefects and Mentors. Applicants impressed with their reflective thinking and dedication to upholding The Gilbert Way, as they prepare to support younger students and represent the school.

We are incredibly proud of all students who put themselves forward. From first leadership awards to senior roles, our students continue to show that The Gilbert School is a community rich in confident, responsible and compassionate young leaders.

Mrs J Clark
Lead Teacher of Student Leadership

Year 8 Students Attend STEMfest 2026

Fourteen Year 8 students recently attended STEMfest 2026 at the Royal Hospital School, joining schools from across the region for a day celebrating cutting-edge innovation and future-focused learning in science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

Students took part in a range of specialist workshops, including sessions on sustainable energy systems, coding and artificial intelligence, and space - discovering the physics that make space exploration possible. A particular memorable highlight was learning about the school's resident peregrine falcons, where students viewed the predators up close and explored their biology, behaviour and conservation.

Throughout this day of hands on learning, our students demonstrated excellent conduct, enthusiasm and curiosity, representing The Gilbert School with maturity. They returned inspired, with new knowledge and a deeper interest in STEM-related pathways.

Miss G Sumner
Assistant Head of Year 8

Mock Magistrates Competition

A huge well done to our fantastic group of Year 8 and Year 9 Gilbertians who took part in the Mock Magistrates Competition at Basildon Crown Court on 14th March.

They represented the school brilliantly, showing confidence, teamwork and impressive courtroom skills. The judges praised their preparation, performance, and professionalism; we could not be more proud!

We would also like to thank Noah Buckley and Charlotte Yu, our superb Year 10 helpers, who supported the preparations of the team and were there on the day to guide the group. Their commitment and encouragement made a real difference.

Miss L Yates
Teacher of English

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.

The School Office

Co-Curricular Provision

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

Careers and Alumni

Join our CEIAG Community! We are calling Gilbert Alumni and employers to be part of our careers provision at The Gilbert 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.

Dates for your diary

Last Day of Spring Term Friday, 27th March	Y11 Art Exam 21st to 22nd April
Easter Holidays 30th March to 10th April	Y11 Textiles Practical Exam 21st to 22nd April
First Day of Summer Term Monday, 13th April	Bank Holiday Monday, 4th May
Y11 Dance Practical Exams (Choreography) Wednesday, 15th April	Y11 GCSE Written Exams Commence Thursday, 7th May
Y8 Parents' Evenings (online) Wednesday, 15th April (X-Pop) Wednesday, 22nd April (Y-Pop)	Y10 Religious Studies Short Course GCSE Wednesday, 20th May
Y11 MFL Oral Exams 16th to 20th April 27th to 29th April	Y7 Parents' Evenings (online) Wednesday, 20th May (X-Pop) Wednesday, 3rd June (Y-Pop)
Assessment Weeks 20th April to 1st May (Y7) 11th to 22nd May (Y8)	May Half Term 25th to 29th May