



THE EAGLE

Message from the Headteacher

I would like to begin by extending a warm welcome to all of our new students, parents and carers as you join The Gilberd School community. We have enjoyed a very positive start to the new academic year. Our Year 7 students have settled quickly into life at The Gilberd, and we look forward to seeing them flourish as they embrace the many opportunities ahead.

Many of our new Year 7 students took part in the Summer Reading Challenge and have already been recognised for their efforts in their English library lessons. They will shortly begin their public speaking workshops, developing the confidence and communication skills that are so important for future success.

We were delighted with the achievements of the Class of 2026, and our highest attainers are recognised below. Every student, however, should be immensely proud of their accomplishments. Many overcame challenges and obstacles along the way, demonstrating resilience, determination and hard work to achieve results that have opened exciting new opportunities for their post-16 studies. We look forward to celebrating their success at the GCSE Awards Evening in November at The University of Essex.

We are also pleased that the school continues to be fully staffed with highly qualified subject specialists, supported by an exceptional team of support staff whose dedication contributes so much to the success of our students.

I hope you find this first edition of The Eagle informative and enjoyable. To keep up to date with the many achievements and activities taking place across the school, please do follow our Gilberd Facebook and Instagram pages, where we regularly celebrate the successes of our students and wider school community.

Mr J Mitchell
Headteacher

GCSE Results Success for the Class of 2026



We were delighted to celebrate the achievements of our Class of 2026 as students received their GCSE results in August. Their efforts throughout their time at The Gilberd School have culminated in some outstanding successes across the year group.

While we are incredibly proud of the excellent academic outcomes achieved, we are equally proud of the many ways our students contributed to school life through leadership roles, enrichment activities and involvement in the wider school community.

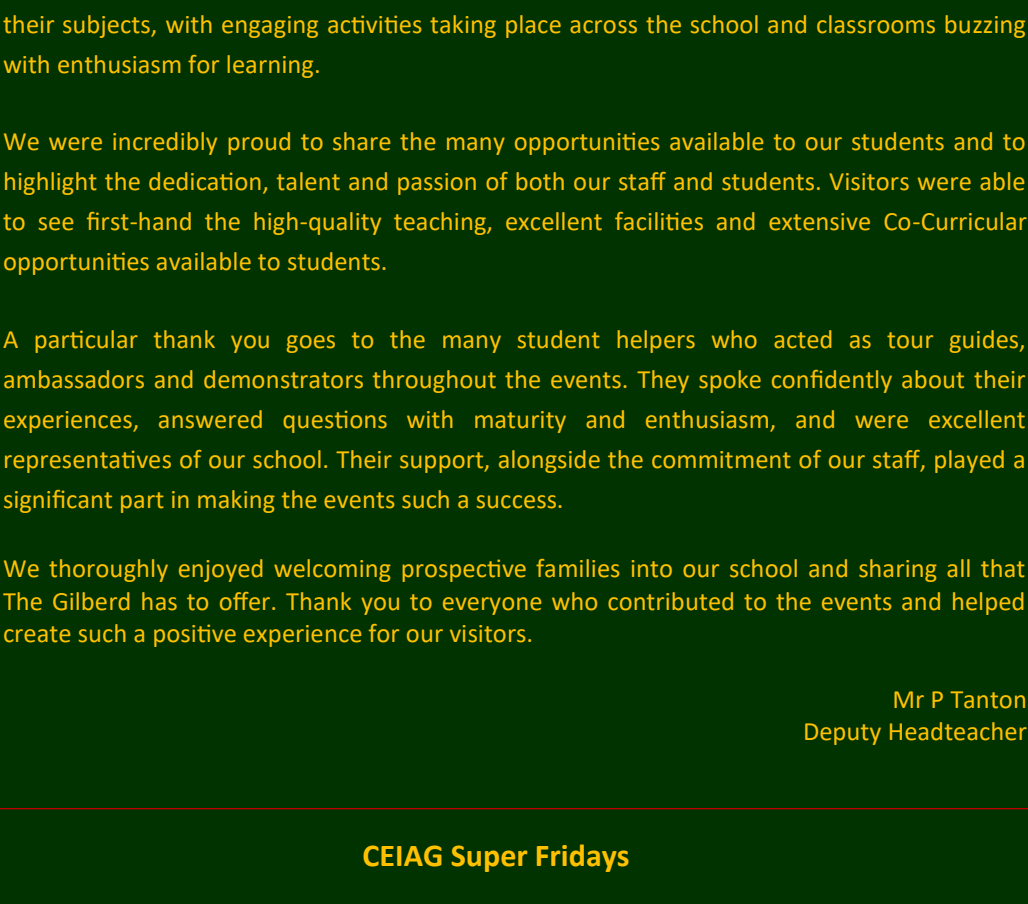
Special congratulations go to some of our highest-achieving students:

- **Aelz Abrar** – Seven Grade 9s, one Grade 8 and two Grade 7s
- **Leo Bateman** – Seven Grade 9s, two Grade 8s and an A in FSMQ Mathematics
- **Finn Bates** – Seven Grade 9s and two Grade 8s
- **Samuel Knights** – Six Grade 9s, two Grade 8s and one Grade 7
- **Dilyana Koleva** – Eight Grade 9s and one Grade 8
- **Vibhas Mallampati** – Four Grade 9s, three Grade 8s, one Grade 7 and one Distinction*
- **Meghana Meda** – Six Grade 9s, two Grade 8s and one Grade 7
- **Nadia Ogilego** – Five Grade 9s and four Grade 8s
- **Elle Pegram** – Six Grade 9s and three Grade 8s
- **Penny Reed** – Three Grade 9s, five Grade 8s and one Grade 7
- **Ann Sibly** – Four Grade 9s and five Grade 8s
- **Sam Starling** – Seven Grade 9s, two Grade 7s and an A in FSMQ Mathematics

We wish all our students every success and happiness as they embark on the next stage of their educational journey.

Miss A Bird
Deputy Headteacher

Year 7 Danbury Camp 2026



At the end of the Summer Term, over 300 Year 7 students took part in our annual residential visit to Danbury Outdoor Centre. Across four action-packed days, students embraced new challenges, developed confidence and resilience, and created lasting friendships through a wide range of outdoor activities.

To give a true student perspective on this memorable experience, Year 8 student Syrena Swinger reflects on her time at Danbury and shares some of the highlights from an unforgettable week.

Danbury: Four Days of Fun, Fear and Very Full Bags
When I first joined the Gilberd, Danbury was one of the first things I was told about. It was our first residential at the school, and after hearing so much about it, it did not disappoint!

In the weeks leading up to the trip, I was nervous and I know I wasn't the only one. However, the nerves were quickly replaced by excitement as over 300 students boarded the coaches with our definitely overpacked bags (I'm still not sure how some people managed to fit their entire bedrooms in theirs!).

When we arrived, we were split into climbing groups, and the fun began. Over the next four days, we barely stopped. We took part in activities, the Danbury Olympics, mountain biking, aerial trekking, Jacob's Ladder — an extremely high ladder that, under absolutely no other circumstances, would I have considered climbing and my personal favourite, kayaking.

Throughout the week, the activities gave us the chance to build confidence, push ourselves out of our comfort zones and develop resilience, all while having an incredible amount of fun. Staying in tents with our friends was one of the highlights too, although I'm not sure the teachers would describe it in quite the same way!

Things got even better when we were allowed to discover that the England football team were playing during our residential. We were divided up to stay and watch the match, which sounded like a great idea at the time. We won't talk about the result... let's just say it was a rather nail-biting evening!

Overall, the four days at Danbury were an amazing experience and something that my friends and I won't forget anytime soon. We made loads of memories, tried things we probably wouldn't normally do and, most importantly, had a brilliant time.

A huge thank you to all the amazing staff who made the whole trip possible. From organising all the activities to keeping us safe, putting up with our endless questions and somehow surviving four days of us, they really did an incredible job!

We're already looking forward to the next residential, although perhaps next time I'll pack slightly less.

Syrena Swinger 8XCMC

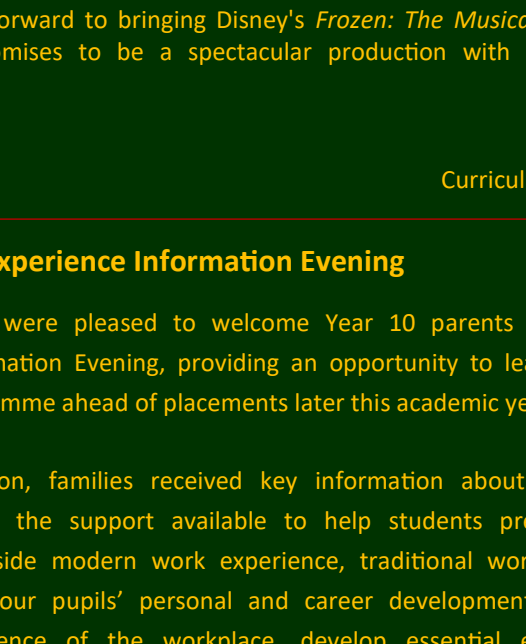
Please click to view photographs from [Danbury Camp 2026](#)

Brightlingsea Regatta

During the summer break our students continued to get involved in some fantastic opportunities.

A group from our Combined Cadet Force joined Brightlingsea Sea Cadets at the Brightlingsea Regatta, taking part in a range of exciting and challenging water-based activities. Demonstrating impressive teamwork, determination and enthusiasm throughout the day, the team secured an excellent second-place finish against strong competition.

Most importantly, they enjoyed a fantastic experience on the water, developed new skills and represented The Gilberd School with pride and distinction.



Captain M Blofield
Contingent Commander

The Gilberd School Open Evening 2026



This month, we were pleased to welcome an exceptional number of prospective students and their families to our Open Evening and Morning Tours.

These events provided an opportunity to showcase life at The Gilberd School and offer visitors a glimpse into our vibrant school community. Departments were busy demonstrating their subjects, with engaging activities taking place across the school and classrooms buzzing with enthusiasm for learning.

We were incredibly proud to share the many opportunities available to our students and to highlight the dedication, talent and passion of both our staff and students. Visitors were able to see first-hand the high-quality teaching, excellent facilities and extensive Co-Curricular opportunities available to students.

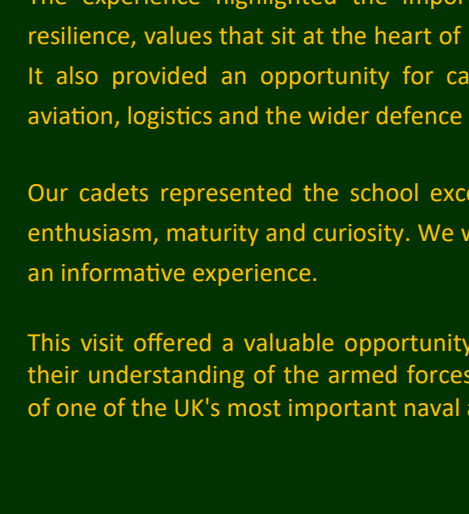
A particular thank you goes to the many student helpers who acted as tour guides, ambassadors and demonstrators throughout the events. They spoke confidently about their experiences, answered questions with maturity and enthusiasm, and were excellent representatives of our school. Their support, alongside the commitment of our staff, played a significant part in making the events such a success.

We thoroughly enjoyed welcoming prospective families into our school and sharing all that The Gilberd has to offer. Thank you to everyone who contributed to the events and helped create such a positive experience for our visitors.

Mr P Tanton
Deputy Headteacher

CEIAG Super Fridays

Let's Talk Post-16



On Friday 4th September, The Gilberd School launched its new programme of Post-16 Lunchtime Drop-in Sessions, welcoming representatives from The Sixth Form College Colchester. This visit also marked the beginning of a series of careers and Post-16 assemblies for Year 11 students, aimed at broadening horizons and increasing awareness of the diverse opportunities available beyond Year 11.

The Drop-in Sessions have been developed to support students in Years 9, 10 and 11 as they explore the full range of academic, vocational and apprenticeship pathways available to them. Through assemblies and informal lunchtime sessions, students have access to impartial information, advice and guidance, enabling them to engage directly with Post-16 providers, ask questions and gain valuable insights to support informed decisions about their future education and career aspirations.

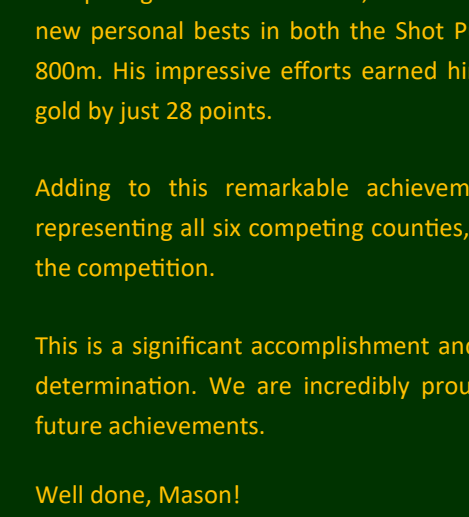


Since the launch, Gilberdians have also had the opportunity to meet with representatives from Colchester Institute, The One Sixth Form College and Sigma Sixth, with many more to follow.

We are delighted to be working in partnership with local education providers throughout the half term, ensuring our students benefit from expert guidance, first-hand experiences and a greater understanding of the pathways available as they prepare for their next steps beyond The Gilberd School.



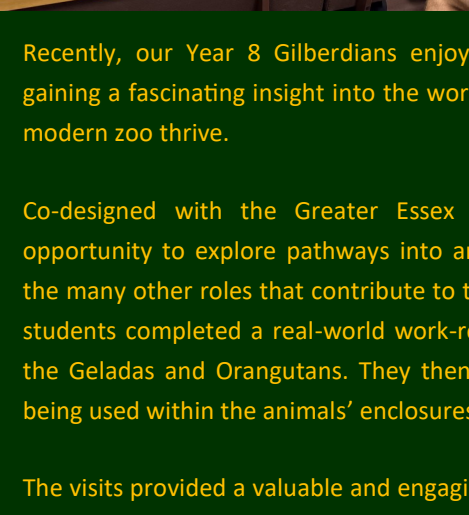
Click here to view [The Gilberd Careers Newsletter](#)



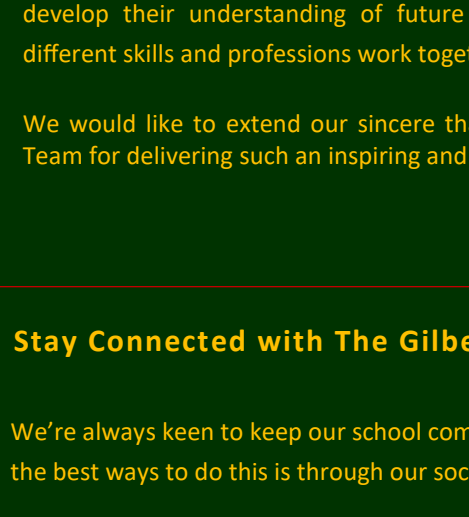
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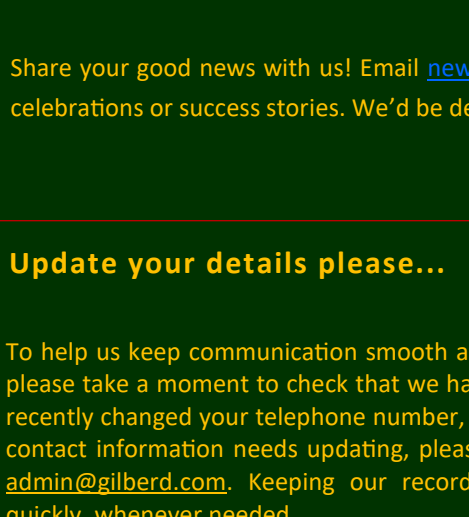
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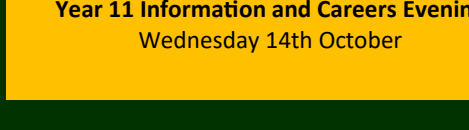
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Future Friday: Royal Navy



We recently launched this year's Future Friday speaker programme by welcoming back Yanislav Yurkevych, Gilberd School alumnus, who delivered an insightful and engaging presentation to our Year 9 and Year 10 students about his career journey in the Royal Navy.

As part of our Future Friday speaker programme, students gained a valuable first-hand perspective on the opportunities, challenges and rewards of a career in the armed forces.

A special thank you to Yanislav for his commitment in travelling to and from the Portsmouth Naval Base in a single day to inspire our younger generation. Students valued the opportunity to hear about his experiences and ask questions.

Oxbridge Coaching Programme

This term we launched our Oxbridge Coaching Programme for Year 11 students, supporting their aspirations for both Post-16 and Post-18 pathways.

As part of our CEIAG provision, students receive expert guidance on personal statements, applications and university pathways. It was a pleasure to welcome back former Head Boy, Alex Cottrell and former Head Girl, Holly Pulham, who shared their experiences and provided advice and guidance to students considering their next steps.

Thank you to both alumni for inspiring and supporting the next generation of students.

Mr R Samjawan
Assistant Headteacher

Safer Roads Essex Theatre Production & Workshop

Year 11 students recently took part in the Safer Essex Roads tour of *Dead End*, a powerful theatre production and workshop exploring the real-life consequences of risky behaviour on and around our roads.

Through an engaging performance and discussion session, students were encouraged to reflect on the impact of their choices as pedestrians, passengers and future drivers. The experience delivered important road safety messages in a memorable and thought-provoking way, helping students to develop a greater awareness of their responsibilities and the importance of making safe decisions.

Our thanks to the Safer Essex Roads team for delivering such a valuable learning experience for our students.

Mrs K Chase
Assistant Headteacher

The Gilberd School Production 2027

The Performing Arts Department is delighted to announce that the next whole-school production will be Disney's *Frozen: The Musical*, taking place from Tuesday 9th February to Saturday 13th February 2027.

Based on the hugely popular Disney animated film, *Frozen* was quickly transformed into a successful Broadway and West End musical, bringing together unforgettable songs, spectacular staging and a touch of Disney magic.

We have been pleased by the response from students following the announcement of this year's production. Audition workshops, which began on 22nd September, attracted nearly 400 students, making this the largest number of auditionees the department has ever seen! Throughout the workshops, students learned the music and choreography that they will perform during the audition process, demonstrating exceptional enthusiasm, energy and talent.

The level of interest has been truly remarkable and is a testament to the commitment our students show towards Performing Arts at The Gilberd School. We are incredibly proud of everyone who has stepped forward to take part and embraced this exciting opportunity.

As preparations for the production begin, there is a real sense of excitement across the school. We look forward to bringing Disney's *Frozen: The Musical* to the Gilberd stage and sharing what promises to be a spectacular production with our school community in February 2027.

Mrs C Howard
Curriculum Lead of Performing Arts

Year 10 Work Experience Information Evening

This month, we were pleased to welcome Year 10 parents and carers to our Work Experience Information Evening, providing an opportunity to learn more about the work experience programme ahead of placements later this academic year.

During the session, families received key information about the placement process, expectations and the support available to help students prepare for this important milestone. Alongside modern work experience, traditional work experience remains an integral part of our pupils' personal and career development, allowing them to gain first-hand experience of the workplace, develop essential employability skills, build confidence and begin to understand the expectations and opportunities associated with the world of work.

The evening also highlighted the positive impact that work experience can have on students' future education and career aspirations, helping them make informed decisions about their next steps.

We would like to thank all those who attended the event and for their continued support. By working together, we can help ensure that our students gain the skills, knowledge and experiences needed to thrive in their future pathways.

Mr R Samjawan
Assistant Headteacher

Year 7 and 8 Freshers' Fayre

Earlier this month, we hosted our annual Freshers' Fayre, giving Year 7 and Year 8 students the opportunity to explore the wide range of Co-Curricular activities available at The Gilberd School.

The event was a fantastic opportunity for students to meet staff and student leaders, learn more about the clubs and societies on offer, and discover new interests beyond the classroom. It was wonderful to see so many students enthusiastically visiting the stalls, asking questions and signing up to activities that sparked their curiosity.

Our Co-Curricular programme plays a vital role in enriching students' school experience, providing opportunities to develop new skills, build confidence, make friendships and pursue personal interests. With more than 50 clubs and societies available this term, there is something for everyone, whether their interests lie in sport, music, drama, STEM, languages, creative arts or community service.

A huge thank you to all the staff and student helpers whose hard work, time and enthusiasm helped showcase the breadth of opportunities available and contributed to such a successful event. Their dedication ensures that students can access a rich and varied programme of activities throughout the year.

We look forward to seeing students embrace these opportunities and make the most of all that Co-Curricular life at The Gilberd School has to offer.

Mrs M Pleasance
Co-Curricular Lead

Combined Cadet Force Visit HMS Prince of Wales

Members of The Gilberd School Combined Cadet Force recently visited HMS *Prince of Wales* at Portsmouth Naval Base.

The visit provided cadets with a unique opportunity to step aboard one of the Royal Navy's flagship aircraft carriers and gain an insight into life at sea. Throughout the day, students explored areas of the ship, learned about the wide range of roles required to operate such a complex vessel, and heard first-hand from serving personnel about their experiences and career pathways.

The experience highlighted the importance of teamwork, leadership, commitment and resilience, values that sit at the heart of both the Combined Cadet Force and the Royal Navy. It also provided an opportunity for cadets to learn more about careers in engineering, aviation, logistics and the wider defence sector.

Our cadets represented the school exceptionally well throughout the visit, demonstrating enthusiasm, maturity and curiosity. We would like to thank the Royal Navy for providing such an informative experience.

This visit offered a valuable opportunity for our cadets to broaden their horizons, develop their understanding of the armed forces, and experience first-hand the scale and capability of one of the UK's most important naval assets.

Sergeant Tavner & Captain Blofield
Combined Cadet Force

Sporting Success

Congratulations to Mason Partridge in Year 9, who recently represented Essex at the Eastern Combined Events Championships in Peterborough.

Competing across five events, Mason delivered a strong series of performances, achieving new personal bests in both the Shot Put and Long Jump, as well as a season's best in the 800m. His impressive efforts earned him a silver medal for Essex, narrowly missing out on gold by just 28 points.

Adding to this remarkable achievement, Mason finished 5th overall among athletes representing all six competing counties, highlighting the strength of his performances across the competition.

This is a significant accomplishment and a testament to Mason's hard work, dedication and determination. We are incredibly proud of his success and look forward to following his future achievements.

Well done, Mason!

Mrs C Pharoah
Curriculum Lead of PE

Year 8 Modern Work Experience at Colchester Zoological Society

Recently, our Year 8 Gilberdians enjoyed exciting visits to Colchester Zoological Society, gaining a fascinating insight into the world of work and the wide range of careers that help a modern zoo thrive.

Co-designed with the Greater Essex Careers Hub, the experience gave students the opportunity to explore pathways into animal-related professions, while also learning about the many other roles that contribute to the successful running of the zoo. As part of the visit, students completed a real-world work-related challenge, designing enrichment activities for the Geladas and Orangutans. They then had the unique opportunity to see their creations being used within the animals' enclosures.

The visits provided a valuable and engaging careers education experience, helping students to develop their understanding of future career opportunities while seeing first-hand how different skills and professions work together within a large organisation.

We would like to extend our sincere thanks to the Colchester Zoological Society Education Team for delivering such an inspiring and memorable experience for our students.

Mr R Samjawan
Assistant Headteacher

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](https://www.instagram.com/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 7 Information Evening Wednesday 30th September	Year 11 MFL Mock Oral Exams W/c 19th October
Year 6 Events Music Aptitude Tests - 5th and 6th October	Flu Vaccinations Y7, Y8, Y9 - Thursday 22nd October
Non-Pupil Day Wednesday 7th October	Individual Photographs Y8, Y9, Y10, Y11 - Friday 23rd October
Year 10 Assessment Weeks W/c 12th and W/c 19th October	Half Term w/c 26th October
Year 11 Information and Careers Evening Wednesday 14th October	