



General Information for Applicants The Gilberd School

The Gilberd School is an exciting and rewarding place to work. We welcome applications from teachers (or trainee teachers) who are committed to raising the aspirations of all students, ensuring that they produce the best possible outcomes. We seek colleagues who are keen to make a full contribution to the continued development and success of the school, and who wish to take full advantage of the opportunities provided to develop their own skills and expertise. We offer exciting and enriching opportunities to all teachers, be they newly qualified, middle or senior leaders, or aspiring to those positions.



The School

The Gilberd School is an 11-16 mixed comprehensive in North Colchester. Demand for places is high; the school is hugely oversubscribed every year.

The Gilberd is a school with a reputation for tradition and high standards, but it also innovates and collaborates with energy. In November 2018 OFSTED judged the school to be outstanding in all categories. Ofsted said – “The school’s key strength is its commitment to a well-rounded education.”

Our students are smart, friendly, polite and hardworking. Relationships between teachers and students are excellent. Our students want to attend school and are eager to learn.

Alpha Academy Trust

The Gilberd School is part of Alpha Academy Trust. As well as The Gilberd School, Alpha Trust comprises of Colchester County High School for Girls, Manningtree High School, The Trinity School and Home Farm Primary School. There are exciting opportunities for collaboration across the trust.

Colchester

Colchester, Britain’s oldest recorded town, is approximately 51 miles from London. Access to the A12 is five minutes from the school and we are just two miles from Colchester train station, with easy access to London, Liverpool Street Station. Ferry travel to the continent via Harwich is easily accessible, as is air travel from Stansted Airport, just 30 miles from Colchester.

Our Staff

Our staff are our most valuable resource. There are 183 staff working at The Gilbert School. Of these, 96 are teachers. They are ably assisted by a team of talented support staff.

A well qualified and trained team of Learning Support Assistants support the work of teachers with students having special educational needs. Our LSAs are linked to specific curriculum areas, thus developing their subject knowledge and the support they can afford our students further.

Continuing Professional Development

Our CPD is driven by the demands of the School Development Plan and our own self-evaluation. We share good practice via our Teaching and Learning Newsletters, display boards and a weekly briefing. Pastoral CPD is also shared in this way. We also use twilights and meeting time to provide whole school CPD, subject CPD and pathways for staff at different points in their career.

Personal Development is part of our triumvirate of Performance Management; we look at both performance and potential. As a school we aim to offer flexibility where we can so that staff at different points in their career can select from CPD pathways most likely to support their development.

With a close relationship to the Alpha Teaching School Hub, we have a range of staff who deliver coaching and training to ITTs and ECTs, both in school and across Essex. The revision of these frameworks ensure that we keep up to date with the most relevant and credited research and are able to provide access to this to all of our staff.

Alpha also offers opportunity in the revised NPQ qualifications, and applications to these are invited, where appropriate, at certain points in the year and dependent on role.

With a senior member of staff working closely with Alpha and the Educational Development Trust with regard to the delivery and content of the Early Career Framework, we are in a strong position to support ECTs.

All new staff are inducted into The Gilbert and appointed a mentor. We have a very clear Induction Programme and staff have a 6-week, 12-week and 18-week review period, as per our Probation Policy.

GCSE Results

Our outcomes at GCSE in 2019 were well above National Average, putting us in the top third of schools nationally for the third year in a row. We were the 10th highest performing school in Essex in terms of Progress 8 in 2019. Our results reflect the hard work of both students and staff.

	2018	2019
APS on entry	28.5	29.0
Progress 8	0.38	0.31
Attainment 8	50.1	50.6
4+ English and Maths	74%	76%
5+ English and Maths	54%	48%
EBACC Progress 8	0.57	0.52
Open Progress 8	0.08	0.00

Accommodation and Facilities

The school is on a large site. There has been considerable expansion and modernisation in recent years. Classroom accommodation is generally modern and spacious. We have excellent sports and performing arts facilities. Curriculum Areas all have staff work offices, and have their rooms grouped together as much as possible. All classrooms have mounted projectors and interactive whiteboards.



Our canteen area has recently been refurbished to support the enhanced dining experience of our students. We have also invested in the showcasing of student achievement and leadership via high profile displays of student photographs, student work and the celebration of alumni success. This has helped to raise the aspirations of our student population.

Library

We have a well-stocked library, manned by a dedicated librarian. Our librarian regularly holds competitions and puts on displays to promote reading, as well as raising awareness of events such as National Poetry Day and Holocaust Memorial Day. Students are encouraged to read regularly for pleasure and are able to use the library for quiet study, accessing the computers if required. Our library is a popular and well used resource, frequently manned by our enthusiastic and zealous Student Librarians.



Curriculum Organisation

Students are set in English and Maths upon entry to the school. This is based upon their KS2 SATs results, although we undertake our own baseline test soon after students join us. Humanities and Science groupings are done according to their English and Maths sets. All students study English, Mathematics, Science, History, Geography, RE, Art, Drama, Dance, Music, Technology, a Modern Foreign Language (French or German), Computing and PE. They also follow a PSHE, Citizenship and Careers Course, known at The Gilberd as Future Skills. This is delivered largely by tutors, with specialists used where appropriate.



In Years 9-11, all students study Mathematics, English and English Literature. In Science, students study Combined Science, unless they opt to study the Separate Sciences as one of their option qualifications. All students follow short course GCSE course in Religious Studies and Ethics as part of their core provision. In addition, students choose four GCSE options within the curriculum areas outlined above. Students are guided in their GCSE choices but have a free choice, allowing them to personalise their curriculum.

A small group of students study seven GCSEs rather than nine and follow our alternative curriculum, known as STEPS. They follow an accredited ASDAN Cope Course and benefit enormously from the personalised provision they are given.

Ofsted said: "The curriculum offers a wide range of opportunity and choice within the timetable and extra-curricular provision. Leaders are committed to providing a curriculum that pupils enjoy, and one where opportunities are open to all pupils regardless of ability."

ICT provision

The school has invested heavily in ICT for a number of years and is committed to developing the very best provision in order to enhance teaching and learning



We run a Windows network with a wide range of applications, including Microsoft Office and subject-specific software programs. We also provide 24/7 home access to the school network for all staff and students. This has given staff greater flexibility in spreading their workload over the day, as well as enabling students to legally use the full range of school software without having to purchase the usual licences.

All classrooms have a ceiling mounted projector or interactive TVs linked to the network. All curriculum areas are fully equipped with interactive whiteboards. The school has an effective VLE, which is being used to support teaching and learning in a variety of subjects.

The school's ICT systems are supported by an in-house team of three ICT technicians, led by our Network Manager. We have dedicated computer rooms which can be booked when they are not used for teaching Computing or IT. Many subject areas have their own suite of PCs or laptops. We also have tablet devices that can be booked for class use. Every member of the teaching staff is given a laptop or access to their own desktop in their office or subject area. Our systems are

reliable and upgraded in line regularly and our technicians are quick to resolve issues if they do occur.

Co-Curricular Offer

Our co-curricular offer is at the heart of our Personal Development curriculum. Central to this is The Gilbert School Combined Cadet Force which we established in 2020. Initially parading with a force of 90 Cadets (A and B Troops) we have a funded plan to grow the force to several hundred Cadets. We therefore welcome all new staff who are willing to undertake a paid commission as an Officer in our contingent.



In addition, a vast array of activities take place from sports, dance, drama and music, to science clubs, STEM competitions, public speaking and debating. The school welcomes staff whose interests and expertise allows this provision to grow and flourish. We were proud to gain the Artsmark Gold Award in 2019 and look forward to developing this further.



Trips

Students are fortunate to experience a number of recreational and educational visits. There are annual language trips to France and Germany; ski trips to Austria; water sports residential trips in France; an annual History/Language trip to Berlin; memorable trips to the First World War Battle Fields sites and Geography field work trips, to name but a few. Year 7 attend Danbury camp in the summer term.



Student Support

Students are organised and supported via a year system. We feel that this best meets students' needs. Each year group is led by a Head of Year, assisted by a non-teaching Assistant Head of Year. Together with the tutors, they ensure that students fulfil their potential and are happy at school. Ofsted said "The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding."

In addition, students are a member of a House. The House system is used for cross-year interaction and competition.

Student Leadership

Student leadership for all is heavily promoted at the Gilberd. Students follow a leadership pathway upon entry to the school. They work towards their Bronze, Silver and Gold Awards as they progress through the school. There are opportunities to apply to be Junior Prefects and Mentors and then to become part of the prestigious upper school prefect team. Our Senior Prefect Body are highly respected within the school, with a rigorous application and process to become Head Boy and Girl. We also have Teaching and Learning Leaders, a highly effective School Council and House Captains. Student voice is strong at the school.



School Leadership and Management

Each Subject/Curriculum Area is led by a Subject/Curriculum Leader who is accountable for student progress in their area. They are responsible for developing and enhancing the teaching practice of those they manage and have a vital role in ensuring that outcomes are high. Middle Leaders meet each half term and share expertise and work together on whole school improvement. They also help to monitor teaching and learning via the school's monitoring systems.

The school's Senior Leadership Team consists of the Executive Headteacher, Head of School and (currently) three Deputy Headteachers, and three Assistant Headteacher, all with major strategic responsibilities. Curriculum Leaders and Heads of Years meet weekly within their respective groups, together with relevant members of the senior team.

Governance

Alpha Trust has adopted a devolved model of governance and as such there is a Local Governing Body for The Gilberd School. Governance is strong. Governors know the school well. Each school is represented on the Trust Board through the Local Governing Board representatives. The Headteacher of Colchester County High School for Girls is Chief Executive of Alpha Trust.

January 2022