



Music at The Gilbert School

The Gilbert is an outstanding school with a clear vision of excellence and attainment. Our Music department is at the heart of the school with a well-established programme of curricular and co-curricular music which includes provision for the 30 students admitted on the basis of music aptitude each year.



Our dedicated team in September 2025 will comprise of three full time staff and ten peripatetic staff who we employ through Essex Music Hub. We currently have around 280 students taking advantage of the lessons provided by Essex Music Hub staff. The Music Department is supported by an Arts Technician.

The Gilbert, and particularly the Music Department, are very active within the Colchester Teacher Training Consortium, enabling our staff to assume greater responsibility and expertise in developing the skills of others via mentoring, liaison with other stakeholders and up to date research.



We currently offer AQA GCSE to all students which consistently has a high uptake. We have 78 students in Year 11 and 46 in Year 10. This represents a much larger than national average uptake for the subject of which we are very proud.

We maintain good links with our local primary schools, other secondary schools and with Essex Music Hub. We have also recently been invited to apply to be a Lead Music School in Essex and await the outcome of this. We regularly host workshops with outside providers including the Colchester Army Band, West Bergholt Band, and the Britten Symphonia. In addition, we perform at the annual Colchester Schools Prom held at the Charter Hall.

Resources

- Three dedicated classrooms with interactive screens, speakers, desktop computer and piano. In addition, each room is equipped with 15 computers and MIDI keyboards.
- A laptop for each teacher.
- Soundtrap and Focus on Sound subscriptions and a wealth of resources on the Gilbert VLE.
- Class sets of djembes and xylophones and a well-equipped percussion trolley in each classroom.

Co-Curricular

- We provide an excellent range of co-curricular opportunities including Pop Choir, Boys Vocals, Advanced Vocals (for which students audition), Flute, Brass, Clarinet, String and Guitar ensembles as well as a 30-piece orchestra and Wind Band.
- Our ensembles perform in two concerts a year in school, as well as a number of community events throughout the year.
- We have a programme of other performance opportunities for students including performances in assemblies and lunchtime recitals.
- Alongside the Drama and Dance Departments we produce a school production in February each year. Auditions for this start in September and it is a big part of the Arts calendar.



Curriculum Organisation

- Students in Years 7, 8 and 9 have two hours of Music each fortnight, whilst in Years 10 and 11 they have five hours. We operate a two-week timetable and lessons are one hour in length.
- Music classes are mixed ability with the exception of our two Music Aptitude classes which are drawn from those students successful in the Aptitude test sat the previous Autumn.
- Each year group is split into two populations for timetabling purposes, the ability profile of each being similar.
- There are six Music groups in each population.

Curriculum Overview

Years 7, 8 and 9

We aim to provide a broad and balanced curriculum which encompasses a diverse range of musical styles as well as a grounding in basic music theory. The curriculum has a focus on rhythm, melody and harmony which we visit and revisit by studying different styles such as Samba, West African drumming, Blues, Reggae, Western Classical Music and Popular Styles. Each unit comprises composition, listening and performing activities and students are encouraged to use technology in compositions from year 7.

Years 10 and 11

- We follow the AQA GCSE Music syllabus at KS4 which looks at Western Classical Music (starting with the Baroque period to the present day), Popular styles (including musical theatre and music for film) and Traditional Music (including British Folk Music, Latin American and Caribbean styles). Each area of study has a Set Work which changes every 3-4 years.
- All students studying at GCSE level are provided with a 15-minute individual instrumental or vocal lesson with our Essex Music Hub team.



Outcomes

Our students perform well at GCSE level. Unlike many secondary schools, students are admitted to taking GCSE without having had formal music tuition. The school funds instrumental tuition for all GCSE music students.

We are a high performing team and seek high levels of progress and attainment from our students. We have a secure history of good results and seek to maintain and further improve these.

KPI	2023 result	2024 result
7+	24%	16%
5+	50%	40%
4+	70%	56%

What are we looking for?

We are looking to recruit an outstanding, organised and enthusiastic teacher of Music to join and lead our Music Department and to assist in maintaining its outstanding reputation, as well as boosting our academic and co-curricular outcomes.

We welcome team players and value the contribution of innovative ideas. We have a strong ethos of supporting each other and developing the skills of our colleagues.

Positive and solution based, you will promote creativity, diligence and excellence in your classroom and will instil this in those that you lead.

As a school, we value oracy and accurate communication; we encourage innovation and a high standard of reflection in teaching and learning.

We look forward to meeting you!