FIRST ISSUE 24/25 OCTOBER NEWSLETTER



VIRTUS HERALD



Celebrating World Space Week 2024

Every year from October 4th to 10th, space enthusiasts worldwide come together to celebrate World Space Week, an international event promoting space exploration and its benefits for humankind. Since its inception in 1999, this week has inspired countless individuals to look up and think about humanity's role in the cosmos. The event is anchored between two significant milestones in space history: the launch of Sputnik 1, the world's first artificial satellite on October 4, 1957, and the signing of the Outer Space Treaty on October 10, 1967, which established space as a peaceful frontier for exploration.

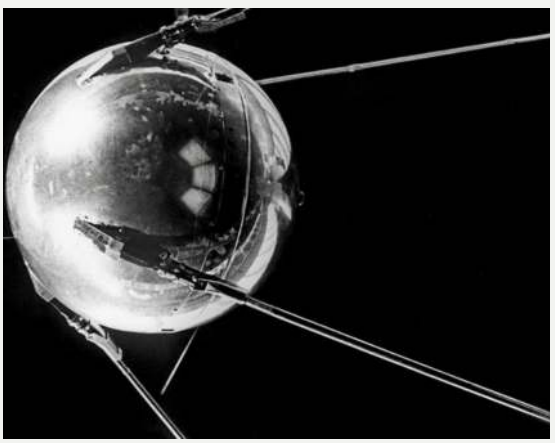


World Space Week 2024 centres on the theme "Space and Sustainability." As our understanding of the universe grows, so too does the need for responsible use of space technologies. The sustainability of our planet and the long-term health of space exploration are closely intertwined. Innovations like satellite technologies are key players in monitoring Earth's climate, providing early warning systems for natural disasters, and ensuring sustainable development.



The week serves as a reminder that space isn't just the domain of astronauts or scientists—it's a field that touches every part of modern life. From GPS navigation to weather forecasts, the technology we rely on daily owes much to the advancements made through space exploration. Moreover, as more private companies venture into space tourism and the potential for lunar habitats becomes a reality, students today may one day find themselves working in jobs that exist beyond Earth.

For students at our school, World Space Week is an opportunity to engage with the future of space. This week encourages participation in discussions, activities, and research that highlight both the wonders and challenges of space exploration. Whether you're interested in building model rockets, researching space law, or learning how satellites impact sustainability, there's something for everyone.



As we look ahead, it's clear that space will continue to be a key frontier for innovation. In celebrating World Space Week, we are reminded that space exploration is a journey for all of humanity, one that is essential to ensuring the future of our planet and beyond.

By: Mr Muñoz

Black History Month



In the UK, Black History Month is celebrated every October. This annual event honours the achievements of Black individuals throughout history and acknowledges the struggles faced by Black communities, including those descended from enslaved individuals brought to the Americas in 17th century; slave trade relocated over 12 million Africans to America. October was chosen for Black History Month partly because it traditionally aligns with a time when African leaders would get together to discuss important issues. Additionally, it coincides with the start of the school year, making it a fitting time for educational activities and discussions about Black history and culture.

Carter G. Woodson, often referred to as the father of Black History Month, was vital for the development of Black History. He was born in Virginia in 1875 to parents who were former slaves. Despite facing obstacles to education and job opportunities, he worked as a coal miner to save money for his studies. Eventually, he attended one of the few high schools for Black students and persevered to earn a PhD from Harvard University and then went on to become a professor there.

The first Black History Month in the UK took place in 1987, marking the 150th anniversary of the abolition of slavery in the Caribbean. This initiative by Akyaaba Addai Sebo, who had arrived in the UK from Ghana as a refugee in 1984.

Initially, Black History Month focused primarily on Black American history, but over time, it has expanded to include significant contributions and experiences from Black British history as well. In the UK, Black History Month has also spotlighted the achievements of Black Britons like Mary Seacole, a nurse during the Crimean War who is the founder of one of our school houses. Mary Seacole is a relevant Black individual as she broke racial and gender barriers in the 19th century, showcasing the contributions of Black women in healthcare and wartime service. Her determination to care for soldiers during the Crimean War, despite facing discrimination and prejudice, shows her resilience and courage. Seacole's story highlights the roles that people of African descent have played in history and that are often overlooked.



By: Gabriela Andronis

Personal Training at Virtus!



This year, Virtus College has introduced a new and very exciting activity to the options of sports, Personal Training led by Elena Toledo Moreno. This class has quickly become a favourite among students as it offers a very entertaining and unique way to stay fit while also having fun.

Elena studied a double degree in Physiotherapy and Physical Activity and sports sciences. During her studies she gave dance classes in different gyms and sports centres in Madrid, until 2017 when she then started working as a personal trainer and physiotherapist in a centre in La Moraleja. In 2020 she achieved her dream, to have her own centre, which is called Healthy Lab. In her centre they specialise in health and well being, as well they offer physiotherapist sessions, personal training, fitness and pole dance classes.

These Personal training sessions are not like traditional team sports, it allows students to have individual fitness goals, as they can decide what is the area that they want to improve, whether its strength, endurance, or simply staying active by enjoying the class. The sessions are designed by Elena to be both challenging and enjoyable, mixing up different exercises like that keeps everyone participating and engaged, which is creating the students to love the variety of exercises mixed with competitive games and workouts. Something which students are also happy about is the fact that the trainers Elena helps each one work at their own pace to be able to gain confidence as they improve their progress weekly.

“I wasn’t sure at first, but now I look forward to doing Personal Training classes every week. It’s really fun and I feel energised, motivated and great afterwards,” one student shared.
With Personal Training now being part of our school’s sports offerings, many students are feeling good, staying healthy, and enjoying fitness with their friends. Many students are loving it, and the buzz around is growing stronger each week!

By: Jimena Gutiérrez Sanz



Virtus in sport

Interview with Riana Parwani



I am a former gymnast, and three years ago, while recovering from a broken ankle after a bad fall during a jump, I felt really lost. The recovery process was long and frustrating, and even after I healed, I found myself hesitant to get back into the sport. The fear of re-injuring myself, especially my ankle, was always in the back of my mind. I no longer had the same motivation or drive that had once fueled me.
During that difficult time, I discovered my passion for riding. From the first moment that I got on the horse i knew that it was going to be my sport.

During these three years I have reached to jumping a level of a metre in class and 80cm in competitions. The process has been hard, it was frustrating because riding is not just about your own body—it's about understanding the horse and creating a connection and trusting the horses instincts. This sport requires a deep bond with another being and it was hard to switch to a self dependant sport to having to depend on a being to pursue my dreams

I would not change my horse for anything; he has helped me grow as a person and supported me emotionally in ways I never expected. There's something incredibly calming about being around him, from grooming to simply spending time together. Riding makes me genuinely happy—it's my escape, my safe place where I can clear my mind and focus on the present moment. He's taught me patience, resilience, and how to be more in tune with myself. The connection we've built is something special, and it's become a vital part of my life, not just as a rider, but as a person.

We've won a lot together, and each victory means so much to me. We've competed in different events and brought home several awards, from small local competitions to bigger ones. Every win shows how far we've come as a team and how much effort we've put in. It hasn't always been easy, but working through the challenges has made us stronger. These wins aren't just about the trophies; they remind me of everything we've achieved together. Winning with him feels like the best reward for all the hard work we've done.

I still have a long way to go in my riding journey, but I'm excited for the future. Riding has become more than just a hobby for me; it's a passion that I hope to continue for the rest of my life. It's helped me rediscover my love for being an athlete, but in a completely new way. Looking back, I never would have imagined that such a difficult and painful experience would lead me to something so positive. But now, I can't imagine my life without riding—it's become a part of who I am.





By: Riana Parwani







MOMENTS



WITH



CASPER

House points

Austen

"It isn't what we say or think that defines us, but what we do."



556 points

2nd Hawking- 313 points

3rd Attenborough- 308 points

4th Seacole- 275 points

By Cecilia

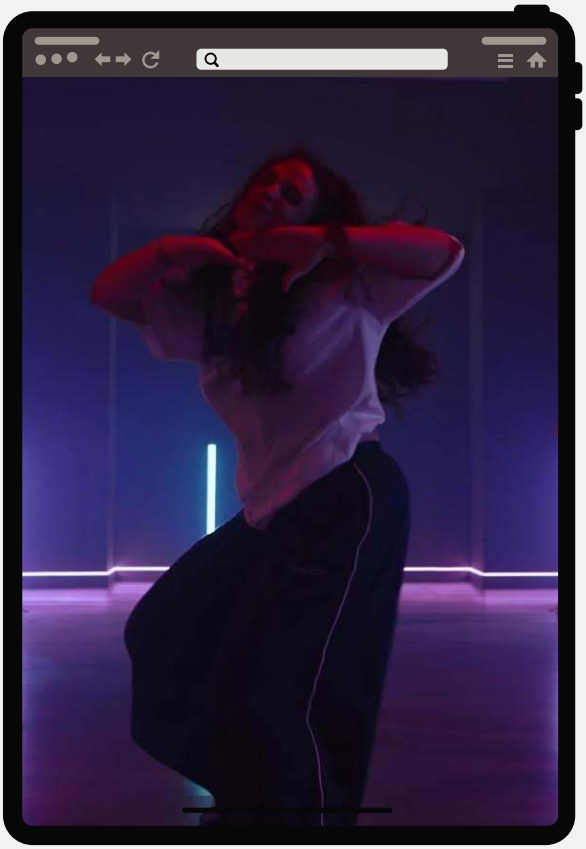
The Secret Life of Teachers
Ms Moreno!



Miss Moreno, one of the school's most beloved teachers grew up in the beautiful Gran Canaria, where she balanced her academic school life with the calm and beachy lifestyle of the Canary Islands. As a child, she spent her days playing volleyball until the age of 16, when she discovered her passion for surfing, embracing the island lifestyle fully.

She attended a British school in Gran Canaria from Year 2 to Year 13, where she made countless memories and became the well-rounded, kind, and dedicated person we know today. After school, she pursued a degree in Urban Planning at Cardiff University in Wales, where she completed a sandwich year: studying the first two years in Cardiff, then moving to London for a year to work as a transport planner. She returned to Cardiff to finish her degree while working in transport planning. Not stopping there, she went on to earn a Master's in International Planning and Development.

When Covid hit, she was finishing her master's degree in the UK and soon decided to return to Gran Carania, after deciding to come to Madrid, where she had the wonderful opportunity to work at Think ahead Academy which led her to become a teacher here at Virtus College.



What makes her story even more inspiring is that she never had a clear career path in mind. She chose her A-levels: Geography, Spanish, Maths and Physics (in which she achieved A* A* A B) based purely on what she liked, never knowing exactly what she wanted to do. In fact, she was certain she didn't want to be a teacher. Little did she know, teaching and mentoring would be one of her greatest callings!

In the classroom, she shines as a Geography teacher and is deeply dedicated to her students' academic and personal growth. Her students are what she enjoys the most about teaching which is shown in her close relationship with them which makes her thrive as a teacher and mentor.

Hobby wise about two years ago, she met a passionate pro dancer, which led her to the discovery of her newfound love for dance. She's always had great musical interest, she now enjoys learning new choreographies and training whether it's hip hop, commercial dance, Afro, reggaeton, or jazz funk in her afternoons.

Beyond teaching, she also has a deep passion for travel.
She's already checked Brazil off her bucket list and more of her dream destinations are Costa Rica and Australia. For her, the perfect lifestyle is the one filled with art, music, concerts, dancing, and exploring new cultures.

Here at school, we absolutely love and admire her, not only for her dedication in the classroom but for the kindness and warmth she brings to every interaction. She's truly an inspiration.

By: Gabriela Andronis

Ms Mahon!



Miss Mahon, one of Virtus School's cherished teachers, is about to begin an exciting new chapter as she prepares to welcome her baby girl into the world. Born to British and Caribbean parents, she grew up in the picturesque city of Birmingham, UK, where she had a lovely childhood in a city which combines the urban lifestyle with available green spaces. Miss Mahon's academic journey began at a local British school, where she took a variety of A Levels to keep her options open studying Biology, Chemistry, Maths, and English Language and Literature. With amazing grades of A's and B's, she went on to study at University of Birmingham, where she earned a degree in Human Biology. Initially, she thought she'd study further from home, but ultimately, Birmingham held her heart. She went on to complete her Master's degree and after found her calling for teaching.

Teaching in the UK had its challenges, but it was her experience in Spain that truly solidified her love for education. Moving to Madrid gave her the chance to find a supportive environment allowing her to thrive as a teacher. She fell in love with Spanish culture, eventually deciding to make it her home. The change in weather didn't hurt either!

Beyond the classroom, Miss Mahon's hobbies are crocheting, candle-making, cooking and reading. And of course, there's Marlowe, her 9-year-old Russian Blue cat, who always enjoys a good nap and his favourite salmon-flavoured treats.

Mis Mahon has a deep passion for travelling. She has a love for exploring the world and learning about new cultures. One of her most meaningful trips was to her family's island in the Caribbean, where she had the chance to connect with her roots and heritage. But not all of her adventures have gone smoothly; like her trip to China where she hiked a remote section of the Great Wall of China and after a bad fall, broke her leg and had to be carried by the local firemen. "But hey, at least I got upgraded to first class on the way home!" is a story she shares with her childhood best friend.





Here at Virtus, Miss Mahon is celebrated for her dedication to education along with the positivity she brings daily. As she prepares for this chapter of motherhood, we know that her students and colleagues will miss her greatly and will be waiting for her to come back and show us pictures of her beautiful baby girl!

By: Gabriela Andronis

School excursions

IE university visit 16th of September 2024

The school took Year 12 students to visit IE University. They had a visit of the campus classes, gym etc. Once they finished with the visit they presented us the different campuses that they have, the courses that they offered and their work methodology.

The university campus has a super modern and spacious layout. It is located in a small tower next to the Four Towers. Throughout the visit we noticed that there are many areas where we can work in groups or relax between classes. During our visit to the campus we were able to see two cafeterias, some classrooms, the gym, the swimming pool and rooms for extracurricular leisure activities. The campus is well located as it is easily accessible by public transport. In addition, there are many shops, cafes and restaurants nearby, which means that if we decide to apply for this university we can always find a cool place to meet up with our classmates.

After the campus tour, a former student who now works at the university gave us a talk in which he told us that the university has degrees in areas such as Business, Law and Communication. The best thing is that they are taught in several languages, mainly English and Spanish. In addition, IE has several campuses, the most notable being those in Madrid and Segovia, which are very modern and welcoming. It is impressive to know that there are students from more than 100 nationalities, which creates a very enriching multicultural environment. This gives us the opportunity to learn about different cultures and make friends from all over the world, which makes the experience even more special. In order to give us an idea of how classes are taught at university, we were given a master class in Physics and Maths in which we did group work. The school has organised this visit so that students can get to know the university campus and consider IE as a possible university destination or clarify any doubts they may have.





By: Sophie Pérez

School excursions

UNIVERSITY FAIR - STUDYING IN THE UK

Last week, our school organized a visit to a British Council university fair, giving students a valuable opportunity to explore higher education options in the UK. During the event, we had the chance to interact with representatives from various British universities, gaining detailed insights into their academic programs, scholarship opportunities, and admissions processes.

This experience provided an important platform for students to explore potential study paths, helping them understand the benefits of pursuing education in the UK. The knowledge gained from this trip will play a crucial role in guiding students' future academic decisions.









University of the Arts London
University of Bath
BIMM University
University of Birmingham
Bournemouth University
University of Brighton
University of Bristol
University of Cambridge
Cardiff University
University College London (UCL)
Coventry University
University of Dundee
Durham University
University of Edinburgh
University of Essex
University of Exeter
Falmouth University
University of Glasgow
Goldsmiths, University of London
Imperial College London
King's College London
Lancaster University
University of Leeds
London Metropolitan University
Loughborough University
University of Manchester
University of Nottingham
Nottingham Trent University
Oxford Brookes University
University of Plymouth
University of Portsmouth
Queen's University Belfast
University of Reading
Regent's University London
University of Southampton
University of St Andrews
University of Stirling
University of Surrey
University of Sussex
University of Warwick
University of West London
University of Westminster
University of Worcester
University of York
London School of Economics and Political Science
University of the West of England, Bristo

By: Riana Parwani

Outside the classroom

Careers day in pictures
23rd September 2024







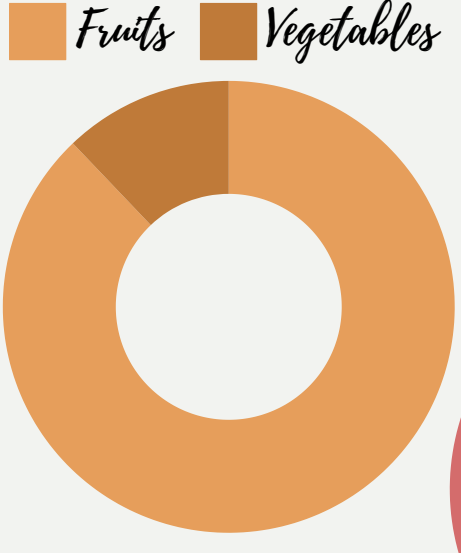


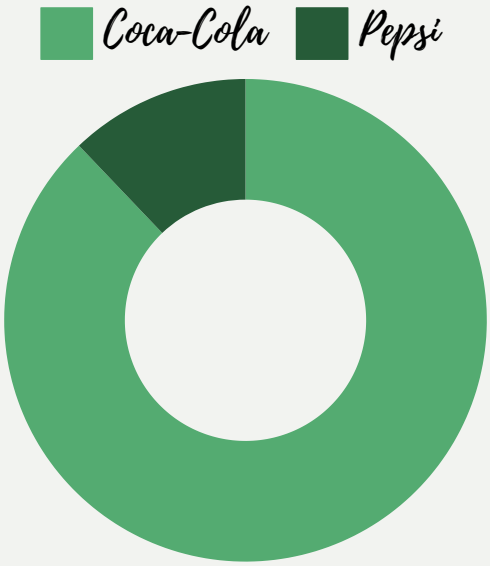


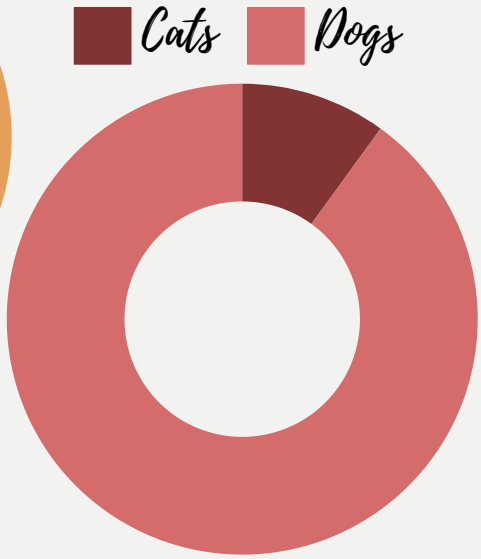


By: Riana Parwani

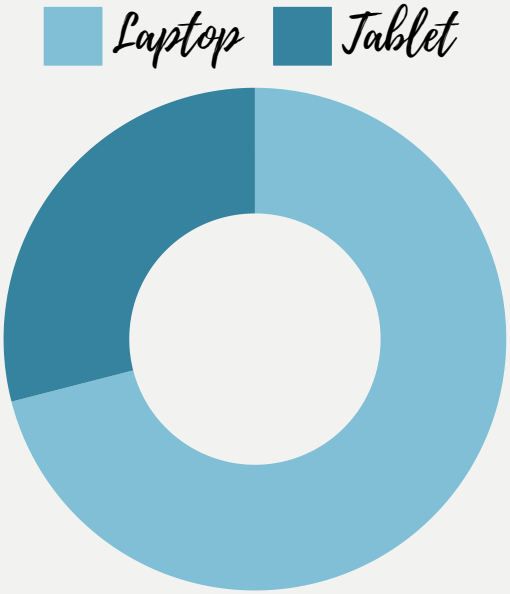
This or that in Virtus

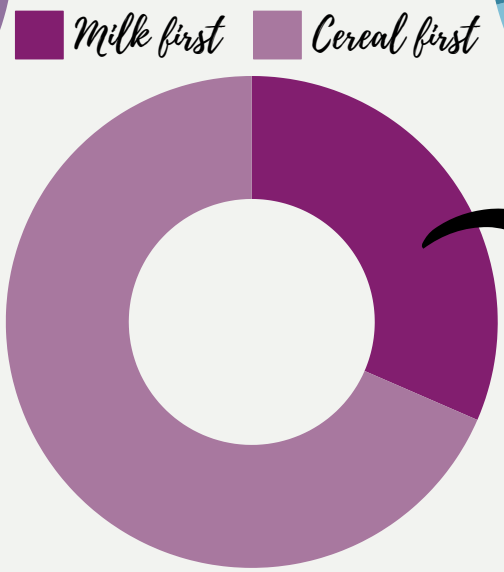












Quote of the week

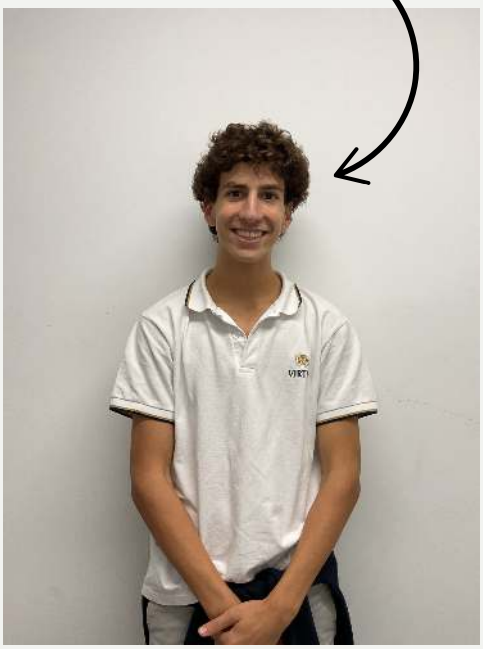
"You gotta be locked up if you choose milk first"

- Australia is wider than the moon
- Art used to be an Olympic event
- 95% of the Universe is invisible
- Humans are the only species known to blush



By: Cecilia Heras

VIRTUS CLOWN



ACADEMIC STAR



MOST PHOTOGENIC

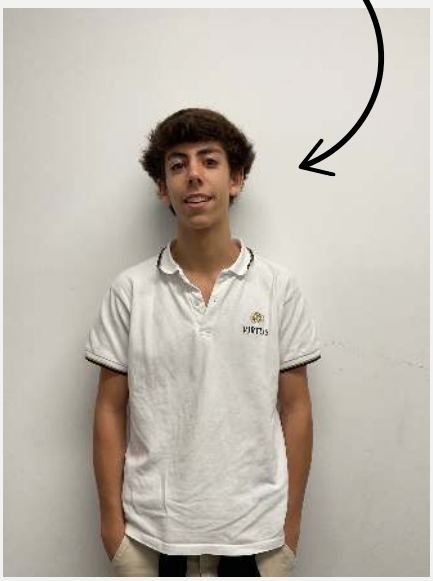


ALWAYS DAY DREAMING

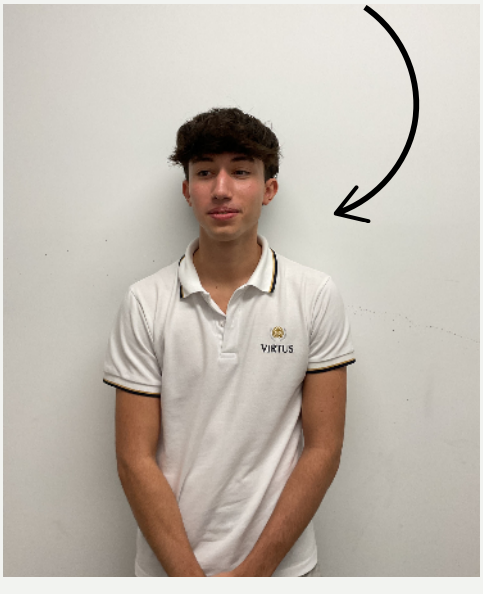


STUDENT SPOTLIGHT Y12

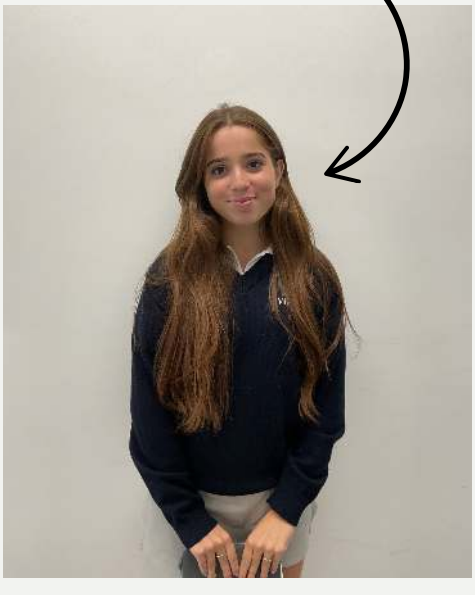
MOST LIKELY TO SLEEP THROUGH ALARM



ADDICTED TO THEIR PHONE



THE BEST HAIR



ALWAYS HANDS IN HOMEWORK LATE



Mental Health

Mental Health is commemorated on the 10th of October annually. Lifestyle factors and routines heavily influence decision-making and behaviour aspects of individuals. These determinations reflect their mental state. In some environments mental health is disregarded and is not given the value and importance it has. Mental health affects everyone, regardless of age, that's why it is important to acknowledge and merit its worth. In this article useful insights on how to prosper mental health will be provided.

Scientific evidence proves that a lack of mental health has an extremely negative impact on your emotional distress suggesting a person will experience emotions such as sadness and anxiety more intensely. As well it will reduce quality of life, this will not allow an enjoyment of the moment and will increase social isolation. People may refuge themselves from social gatherings leading to loneliness. All these factors will affect the general well-being. However, there are measures to take and help from professionals can be offered.

There are several ways to improve mental health. A good example of this is practising mindfulness and meditation to improve emotional regulation. As well regular exercise to reduce anxiety adding to this a balanced and regulated diet is also crucial to gain protein es and energy. Adequate sleep is also important because it improves cognitive function and improves mood.

In conclusion, a positive supported mental health is exceptionally key. Stressful habits and routines can sometimes damage mental health, but it is important to know mental health can be promoted by a consistent habit of positive practice and schedules.

By: Sofía García



Credits

We hope you enjoyed this issue of the Virtus Newspaper! Every edition will be different and hopefully you can learn a thing of two from it.

Here is who is behind this project:

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Ms Mahon - Interviewee
Ms Moreno - Interviewee

