THE VIRTUS HERALD

VIRTUS OPEN DAY, ABSOLUTE SUCCESS



How do students control anxiety during exams?

Virtus students visited the British Education Fair 2023

Virtus donates 352€ to “El Sueño de Vicky”

NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER ISSUE **VOLUME 2**

RECOMMENDED ON WORLD SCHOOLS 2023

VIRTUS
The British
Sixth Form College

WE WISH YOU A

MERRY CHRISTMAS

Virtus students wish you a Merry Christmas and a successful 2024.

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TIPS FOR MANAGING ANXIETY

By: Jimena Gutierrez

Nowadays, **kids have high levels of anxiety and depression**, as confirmed by UNICEF analysis, we can see here that 55% of European teenagers between the ages 10 and 19 have been diagnosed with one of these mental health issues.

However, we don't have to be diagnosed with anxiety, depression, or stress to get nervous when we have something important coming up such as exams, as it is a normal feeling for all of us. Something which we hear very often is to **not overwhelm ourselves with the upcoming events**, which in theory sounds easy but it is something which many people struggle with.

Here are some tips that may help change your mindset:



1

Try to give yourself as many enthusiastic and positive thoughts as possible. When you believe in yourself and you are confident in your abilities and capabilities you start realising that things are not as hard as you initially thought they were.

2

Go at your own pace. Take things step by step, with a rhythm that you can manage, because sometimes we tend to rush into things as we want them to happen sooner, but in fact most of the time it only adds to the stress and it can make us feel frustrated when we get negative outcomes in our work.

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3

Sleep as much as you can. Anxiety is frequently connected to the lack of rest, which creates a negative cycle of insomnia and many anxiety issues. Having a good sleep is fundamental for keeping your brain calm. There is a study that says that young people should sleep at least eight hours a day, as it will lower the risks of any health problems, will reduce stress, will improve your mood and will help you think more clearly and do better in exams



4

Balance sports and school work. Sport is a great way to reduce stress, it reduces the levels of body stress hormones and will stimulate the production of endorphins which act as painkillers. It is very useful to take breaks when you are studying, to leave your work aside, so that you can shift your attention into something else for a period of time. Doing some exercise or taking some fresh air is very important to clear your mind so that you can focus better when you go back to study.

5

Focus your attention. There are many great activities which can help you to focus your attention and make you feel less stressed, such as drawing, meditating and breathing, making lego structures, reading, listening to relaxing music... What many people do is to write down all their thoughts, ideas, feelings, goals, worries, how to overcome or solve your problems without taking in consideration spelling things properly, just focussing on writing down everything that comes up to their mind, helping to let go of all those things which are making you feel concerned or not okay.

STUDENT LIFE



6 **Make the most of the people that surround you.** Quality time is such a good way to prevent us from feeling anxious, stressed or even nostalgic. Quality time gives you an energy boost, the moments where we have fun and do things which we enjoy are moments which we all need for our mental health, we all need to take some time to talk to others and spend time with family and friends.

7 **You can see the light at the end of the tunnel.** It is even more important to write down the good things that happen to us, it is a great habit to write down at least ten positive things that happen to us during the day, like that we can take a look of how lucky we are and how grateful we should be, and realise how sometimes we just need to write down all the amazing things that we have.

You don't lose anything by trying out these tricks, I'm pretty sure each one of us can find one that works for us. Whether trying them or simply talking to someone you are comfortable with, which will always help to make you feel better and realise how it's normal for everyone to feel nervous or stressed during exams.



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STIDY TIPS





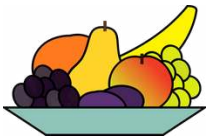
By Matteo Milesi Martin

Top tips before an upcoming exam:



“Do not disturb” - Find a quiet place!

Quality over quantity!



Calm music for a calm mind!

“Ring ring” - Keep your phone far away!



Feed your body, feed your mind!

Review, highlight, summarise and colour away!



How many past papers can you get through?



Time yourself!

Last, but by no means the least - take care of yourself! Mental health comes first!



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UNIVERSITY FAIR

By: Niolas Davis Ruiz

Virtus students visited the British Education Fair 2023 on the 25th of October, from 11:00 to 13:30. They went by bus and went to explore different UK universities.



The fair was held at the **British Council School** and showcased 48 UK universities. There were representatives from some prestigious ones such as **University of Cambridge** (ranked 2nd globally in the QS rankings), ones that specialise in the arts, like University of the Arts London, and ones that are strong in engineering such as Imperial College London. These representatives were willing to answer questions on the university, on the subjects they teach, the degrees they offer, how many years the degrees are, and had lots of written material about their universities that was available to give the attending students.

Most of the attendees found this event very useful. Even Year 12 students. Jaime Abarca, who plans on staying in Spain for university, got some good information. The event, with its timing in fall, was particularly beneficial for t**he Year 13s who may be thinking of** studying in the UK next year because they were able to get a lot of valuable information in order to make a more informed decision before sending their **UCAS applications**.



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OPEN DAY

By: Elena Álvarez





On the 23rd of November we held the **Virtus Open Day,** where we showed the public how well we work and who we are. The Student Leadership Team and the Subject Ambassadors stayed the whole day to help us out and to give a warm welcome to the visitors. There was a presentation where they talked about who we are and what we do and have to offer. **The Student Council served the guests and welcomed them to our school to make them feel welcome**. After the presentation, the visitors were guided to the classrooms and the roof by a member of the Student Council, who then made their way upstairs to the classrooms to show them what each subject had to offer, where the **student ambassadors were helping their teachers** and explaining to the visitors what the subject was about, the content and what the exams involved.

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INTER-HOUSE BAKING COMPETITION



On the 27th of October, **the hallways of Virtus were full of students getting their hands on some delicious treats to have in between classes.** This special occasion was initiated by the Student Council to raise money to donate to a "El Sueño de Vicky" charity. Representatives from **all four houses competed to make the best baked goods** and were told to make either cookies, cakes or cupcakes. While some students bought goods and brought them to the competition, other contestants showed off their culinary skills by baking their own sweets to bring to class.

This was a great idea from the Student Council because it fed hungry students while simultaneously helping the less fortunate. Events similar to these would be beneficial as it appeals to the students and also gives back to the community.

Great job, Student Council!



STUDENT LIFE

Anxiety workshops

During Friday 10th and 17th of November, students had the opportunity to **take a break from lessons and assignments and experience mindfulness in the Stress and Anxiety Workshop** organised by our Pastoral Prefect Vivian, Miss Mahon and Miss Moreno. They organised two sessions with the aim of giving students a safe space to talk about any stressful feelings they may be having and enjoy activities that would help settle their busy minds.



The first session was full of activities! As you entered the room, the soothing background music and sweet vanilla smell of the burning scented candle automatically calmed students down. For half an hour, they had the opportunity to enjoy the silence or talk about their worries whilst they coloured in mandalas, **became creative thinking outside the box** with unfinished drawings, and making stress balls with balloons, flour and rice. This first session was successful in creating a safe atmosphere for students.

The following session was a deeper, more individual session. Students started off by blowing up some balloons, where they wrote the negative things they thought about themselves and inevitably, had them feeling anxious day-to-day.

STUDENT LIFE

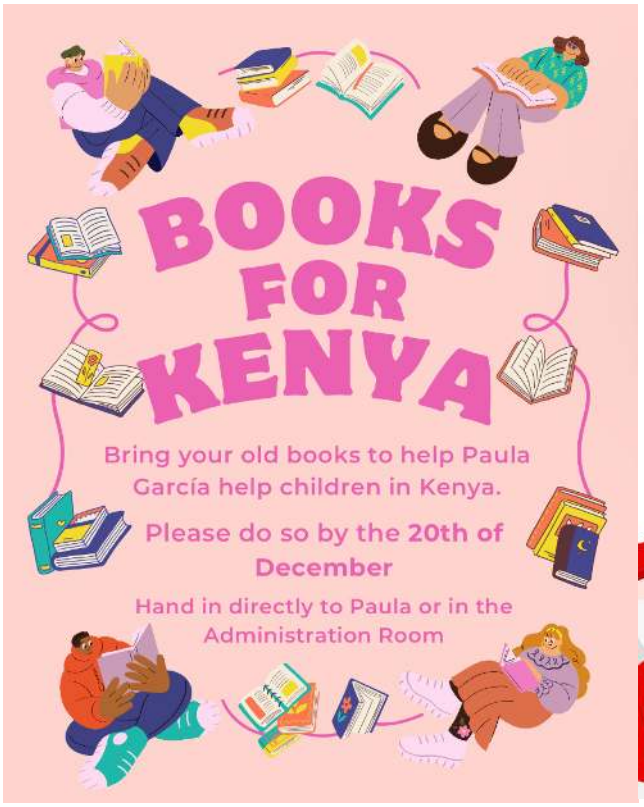
After a quiet thoughtful moment, students popped these balloons to symbolise **getting rid of these negative thoughts and feelings** and replaced this negativity by writing a love letter to themselves where they could only write about positive things they liked about themselves. **This emotional and relieving activity saw the room fill with smiles by the end of the workshop**.



Overall, **students found this workshop very helpful in aiding them to deal with pre-exam stress and anxious thoughts that arrive through the intense A-Level period**. They all agreed it was a very positive experience and initiative. We are all looking forward to more workshops next term!

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Charity



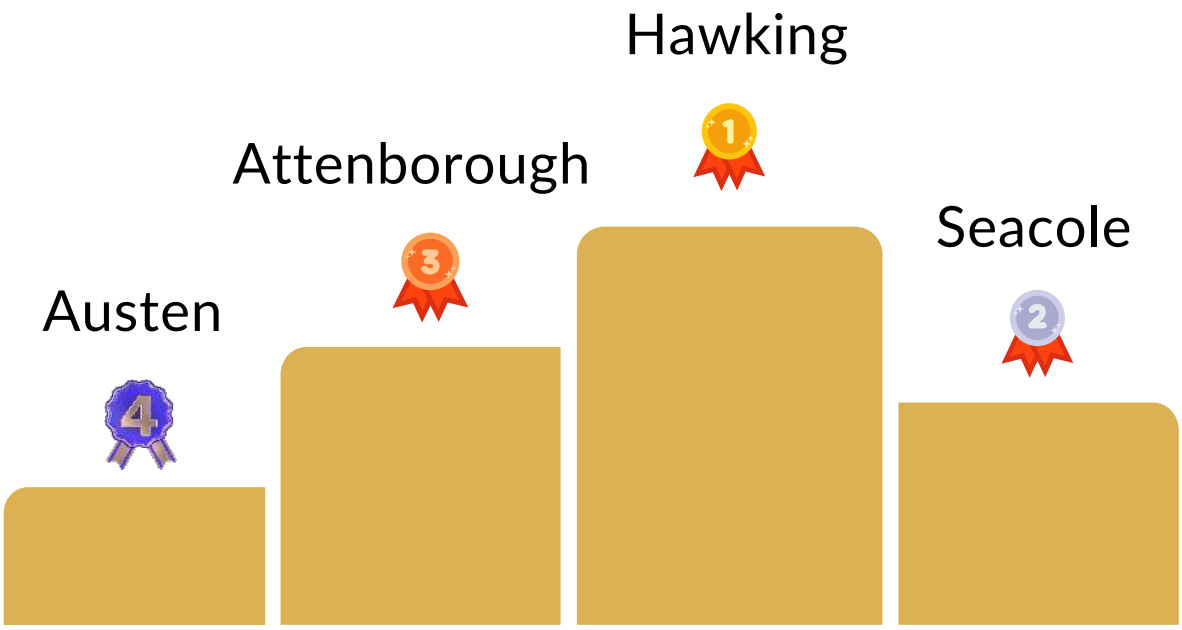


el sueño de VICKY | FUNDACIÓN PARA LA INVESTIGACIÓN DEL CÁNCER INFANTIL

STUDENT LIFE

House standings

By: Elena Álvarez



Since the start of the year the houses have been fighting for house points to lead their house to the top. We have had inter-house competitions in debate, padel and baking, were the houses have competed to gain the most house points. However, they gave also collected many house points throughout the school year in their classes when shown good collaboration and enthusiasm and for outstanding behaviour and homework. The individual house points will be added to the ranking at the end of the term. **Currently, just taking into account the inter-house competitions, the leading house is Hawking. But how long will they last as Attenborough is only 25 points behind!?**

Points:

Hawking - 225

Attenborough - 200

Seacole - 175

Austen - 150

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The joy of giving

By: Mrs Radford. Headteacher, Virtus The British Sixth Form College

As the holiday season slowly unfolds, the December air becomes infused with a special kind of magic – **the Christmas spirit**. It is easy to get carried away with the excitement. However, it is important to reflect that this time of year is not just about festive decorations, twinkling lights, and exchanging gifts; it's also a season that invites us to embrace the joys of giving and reflects the true essence of Christmas. This can be often forgotten amongst the chocolate, the shopping and presents.

One powerful way to experience this spirit is through the joy of giving.

The act of giving goes beyond the material exchange of presents and the giving of goods. It taps into the core of our humanity, reminding us of the profound satisfaction that comes from making a positive impact on the lives of others. Some of the happiest countries in the world are those with a strong sense of community, where one is interlinked with another and gives time and help willingly. During the Christmas season, this joy of giving is heightened as we seek out opportunities to share our blessings and spread goodwill. **Whether it's donating to a local charity, participating in a gift drive, or simply offering a helping hand to a neighbour in need, the act of giving fosters a sense of connection and community.** The smiles, gratitude, and genuine appreciation from those we help create a ripple effect of positivity, transforming the holiday season into a time of shared happiness. It reminds us of the joy that comes from the simple act of giving, contributing positively to the lives of others. What else gives us so much back.

The Christmas Spirit:

There's something truly magical about the Christmas spirit that sets it apart from the rest of the year. It's a spirit of love, compassion, and generosity that permeates the air, encouraging us to look beyond ourselves and consider the well-being of others. **This spirit is embodied in the selfless acts of kindness that characterise the holiday season**, reminding us of the importance of unity and understanding. It serves as a reminder of what matters, or what should matter most to us.

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Volunteering takes the joy of giving to new heights, providing a hands-on way to embody the Christmas spirit. When we volunteer our time and skills, we become active contributors to positive change in our communities. Whether it's serving meals at a local shelter, giving non-perishable goods to Paula Garcia´s Kenyan charity initiative, wrapping gifts for underprivileged children, or spending time with the elderly, volunteering allows us to directly impact the lives of those who need it most. **Your selfless act can mean so much, your smile and kindness can lift someone else up.**

Reflecting on the act of volunteering during the Christmas season, we find a unique opportunity to connect with the deeper meaning of the holidays. It's a chance to step outside our daily routines and into a world where empathy, kindness, and compassion are the guiding principles. Volunteering not only benefits the recipients but also enriches our own lives by fostering a sense of purpose and fulfilment.

As I often say, we have a duty to make our corner of the world a better place.

Ubuntu:

There is a Zulu word called Ubuntu. It is my favourite word and I feel it represents the invisible and deeper connections so heightened during the festive season. .

Ubuntu means ´I am because we are´. The doctor functions because his children are at school all day, so he depends on the teacher. The teacher depends on the car mechanic to get to work, and the car mechanic depends on the doctor to be well enough to perform his job.

I am because we are.

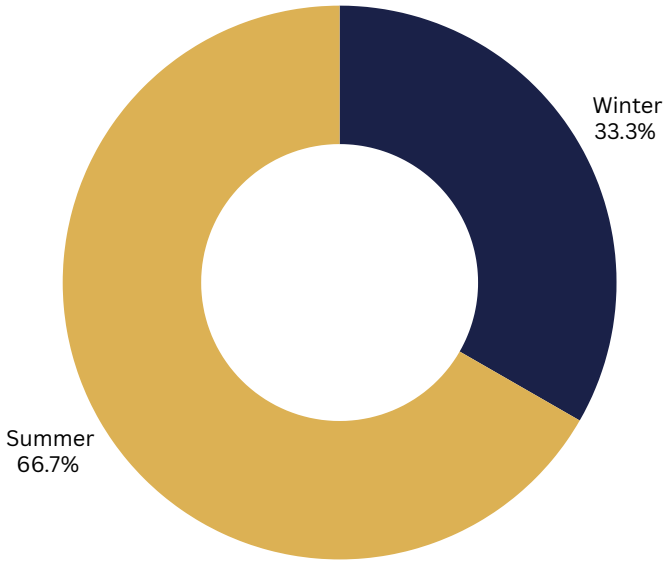
In this festive season, we are reminded of the invisible connections between us, the bonds which hold us together, in a warm, loving community. I am because we are. You are because we are. Beyond the festive decorations and glittering lights, the true magic of the season lies in the genuine connections we forge and the positive impact we make on the lives of others. **Remember that you are what you give to others, so give kindness, love, time and help this season**.

I am because you are.

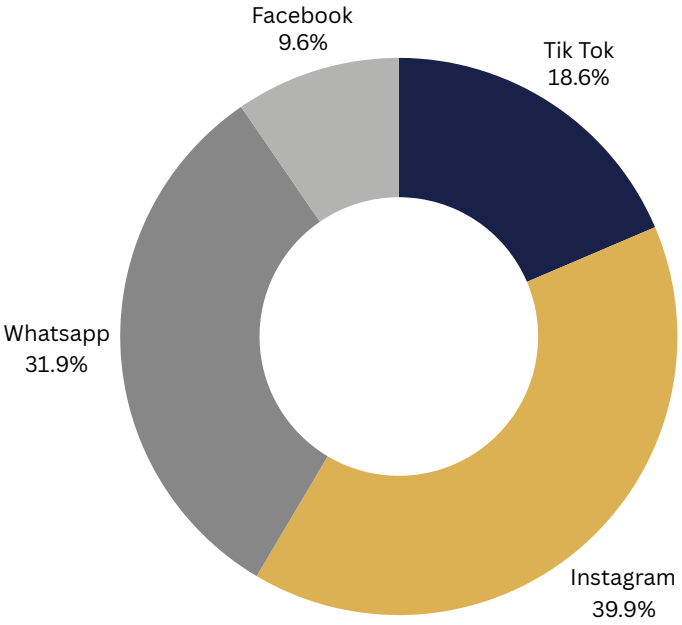
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Fun information

Do you prefer summer or winter?



What social media platform do you use more often?




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