

EDUCATION & LEARNING

Round table. Experts discuss the changes and challenges that lie ahead in education **P11**

Schoolwork showcase. Students' artwork, poems and short stories **P2-8**



Outside the classroom. Charity events and other school projects **P14-18**



Inspiration for the future

International schools on the Costa del Sol,
shaping a new generation

SCHOOLWORK SHOWCASE

RUNNER-UP PRIMARY ARTWORK

Fleabag the Dog

Javier Olcina Morente,
Age 5
Swans Primary School

Georgina Oliver said: "This is filled with rhythm. You can feel the child enjoying doing it - sense his movements as he does it. It's lively and appealing. The dog comes to life. You can feel the presence of the child."



BEST PRIMARY STORY

The Warming

I never would have guessed what was coming. I mean, it is pretty hot here in Australia but never before had the red earth been so scorched. Never before had the air emitted such heat. Never before had the leaves shrivelled on their branches and crumbled to dust. We were having one of those big meetings when the koalas in the outback united to speak about something important.

"Gather round, my fellow friends, gather round," said Alpha Jestin, the leader of our group. "We are here to discuss The Warming - a very serious problem far to the West. Whatever you do, don't go anywhere near it! You will surely suffer a terrible death." He seemed to be looking directly at me; probably just my imagination.

"The Warming!" The words echoed inside my head, releasing a gust of excitement throughout my body. What could he mean? I turned to Henry, "Let's go and have a look!" I hissed.

"I'm not sure," Henry looked aghast. "Just a peek - come on, Henry! I know you want to."

Henry smiled wryly. I grinned. We flew through the eucalyptus trees. I

loved it. Jumping from branch to branch. This was truly an adventure. "Race you to the river," I cried.

When I got there, I stopped dead. What met my gaze was unbelievable. Flames enveloped the trees along the banks with long claws of heat. Fire! Was this The Warming? How had it happened? Humans - it had to be. Those two-legged demolishers of nature.

"Nico!" It was Henry. The fire had reached the corpse of trees we were in. The flames crept up the trunks like snakes coiling around their prey. This was it. Death would soon take us. I was a fool to have dragged Henry into this! We stayed, huddled together on the branches. Our only hope rested on the shoulders of humans. Only they could rescue us now, but would they?

Nicolás Minguela Espinosa de los Monteros, Age 11
Laude San Pedro International College

Liz Parry praised the dialogue in this story - just like real children - and the vocabulary used to describe the heat. The story ends with a worrying question - they are in the hands of the "two-legged demolishers of nature" he so well describes.

BEST SECONDARY POEM

Coming Home

I hit my head on the dusty frame
A gorgeous, maple dome.
I stood there swaying,
silent praying,
before my childhood home.

Heavy steps against the floor,
an ancient silence burns.
The stirring chairs
shoot fiery glares,
unwanted guest returns.

Across the room, the mantelpiece,
devoid of youthful flame,
steals my view
and draws me to
a broken picture frame.

The walls draw closer, air gets thin
my fingers touch its edge.
The perfect smile
of mother and child
hide bloodstains on the ledge.

Ceiling pressed against my head
my ankles brush the drawers.
As memories flood
and freeze my blood,
I'm forced down on all fours.

Towards the staircase, crawling low
I force out distant screams
of muffled fights
through sleepless nights
that stole my childhood dreams.

The misted windows watch in awe,
then blink their curtains closed
as beams of pine
compress my spine;
no mercy this house shows.

Curled tight inside the wooden jaws
my vision blurs to black.
Through cries of rage
that shake my cage
there comes a vivid crack.

Clean through the roof, my body bursts
a thunderous, piercing roar.
Sunlight reflects
off shattered specs
as splintered showers soar

But left in wrecked ruins stands
the lonely mantelpiece.
I free a cry
and lift my thigh
to bring my heel down on the beast.

Jessica Newton, Age 17
Swans International School

Songwriter Peter Edgerton had this to say about this "quite excellent" poem: "Vibrant, colourful vocabulary combined with an arresting rhythm make this poem a profound pleasure to read. There's a musical tone to it, which further stirs emotions."

BEST PRIMARY POEM

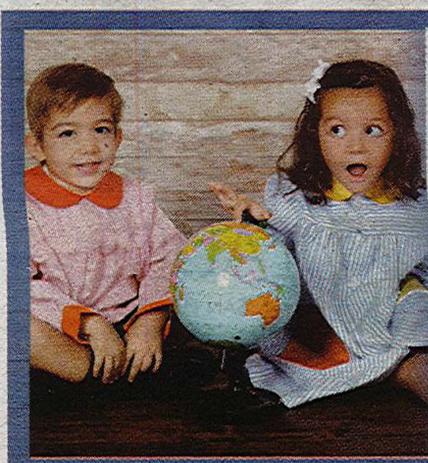
Late Night Working

Mildred's pale blue dress shining in the light
Heavy rain drumming against the window
The room held the scent of a memory
I yawned slowly and rubbed the smooth table
Some whisky from my secret flask,
To keep me awake.
I was as tired as an old cat.
Midnight.

The rain now turning into a storm,
"You can go home," I said to Mildred
"And what if I want to stay?" she replied.
Angry lightning flashed in a cloud
The thunder was so loud it was almost deafening.

Cielo Davies, Age 10
Swans Primary School

"Striking imagery abounds from the opening line onwards. Referencing the anger of lightning and the scent of a memory were particularly nice touches, I think," said Peter Edgerton. This poem was part of a project that required students to respond to an Edward Hopper painting.



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SCHOOLWORK SHOWCASE

RUNNER-UP SECONDARY STORY

In the Name of Progress

A monochromatic canvas torn through by the calloused hand of war.

The paint is strewn across in panicked, sloppy strokes of choked greys and corpse browns. The sketchy outlines of a sky, the bruised bodies of the clouds, and the dotted specks of black rain all frame the picture in a cruel portrayal of death.

Amongst the remains of a battlefield lie thousands of strewn figures half-buried in ash and soil. Their eyes are picked clean. Bullets are planted like seeds in the basket of their yellow ribs. Amongst the brittle bones of faceless soldiers lies a tangle of machinery red with rust. Synthetic muscles tense and pull in order to lift the machine off the ground. A single eye carved down the center of its steel head glows faintly. It slowly begins to survey its surroundings. Each torn limb, each rotten face, is scanned, failed to identify. The machine's rubber torso whirrs and folds awkwardly as it moves along.

Before it can examine the other bodies, it catches movement up ahead in the wasteland. It is a man, clothed in rags with his mouth covered by a filtering mask, but a man nonetheless. He holds a crude metal detector in his bandaged hands and waves it haphazardly over the bodies. He looks up at the hunk of metal and tips his worn baseball hat, muttering a greeting.

"I figured there wouldn't be any of you left after the explosion."

The machine does not reply with an explanation, but rather with a question.

"WHAT HAPPENED HERE?"

"Look around, tin can. What do you think happened?"

The machine's eye flickers.

"HUMANITY."

The rain clinks against its hollow chest and rolls down the metal frame until it pools below its feet.

Lola Martín Higuera, Age 14
Swans International School

SPECIAL MENTION PRIMARY ARTWORK



Gonzalo Labajos,
Age 9
Novaschool
Sunland
International

Goergina Oliver was particularly impressed with the movement in this image, a Yayoi Kusuma inspired 'infinity cherry' textile design - Dip dye, fabric crayons on cotton. "This has an extra boost of life to it, more movement than the actual artist's patterns. This artist makes the pattern come to life," she said.

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SCHOOLWORK SHOWCASE

RUNNER-UP PRIMARY POEM

My Favourite Trip

Going from Paris to,
Disney Pixar,
My memory,
Through the window,
Moon like a meteor,
Darkness of train ramp,
Black cars like chaos,
The dark Eiffel Tower
Looked like,
A giant ink machine,
Broken,
Elevator,
Jammed.

Youssef Riyani Elkhiln, Age 7
Laude San Pedro
International College

SPECIAL MENTION PRIMARY STORY

The Beauty of the Sea

As the sun slowly rose in the rich, royal orange sky, Conner woke up, put his clothes on, had breakfast and happily went outside. As he walked around the deck, he thought about how calm and relaxed he would be on his vacation on the cruise. Conner took a water bottle out of his pocket and heard the seagulls squawking and the waves as he drank it. After, he threw the bottle into the sea and went inside for his fishing rod.

When Conner started fishing, every one fish out of five he caught were dead. When he got tired, he ate a packet of crisps, threw it into the ocean and caught one last fish. Since he had stayed up late last night, Conner put his fishing rod and the bucket of fish in his dormitory and stretched his body out on a deck chair. Since there was no one around him, Conner was put to sleep by the silence.

Suddenly, a turtle went up to the surface and found Conner sleeping on the silent deck.

With a slow voice the turtle told him, "Young man, please don't pollute the ocean or the fish your species eat will be full of the plastic that you throw into the ocean and you might get sick. Maybe if you stop polluting, less people will be sick." After saying that, the turtle went back into the dark water.

Slowly, a colossal whale came up to the surface, found Conner and said with a deep voice, "Young man, please don't pollute or there will be more natural disasters and the ice layers of the poles will melt. If you don't stop you will end up destroying the world." When he finished, he went down into the depths of the ocean.

After some time, Conner woke up and realised he had been sleeping for one hour. As he got up, Conner drank a can of coke but just as he was going to throw it into the sea he saw a whale, a turtle, a group of dolphins and lots of other fish looking at him. He realised that the ocean was important to the Earth and he couldn't destroy it. Conner hesitated and after a few seconds he lazily put the can in the bin.

**Juan Rafael Cabezas
Rambla, Age 9**
Swans Primary School

SPECIAL MENTION SECONDARY ARTWORK



Elena E, Age 14
Sunny View
School

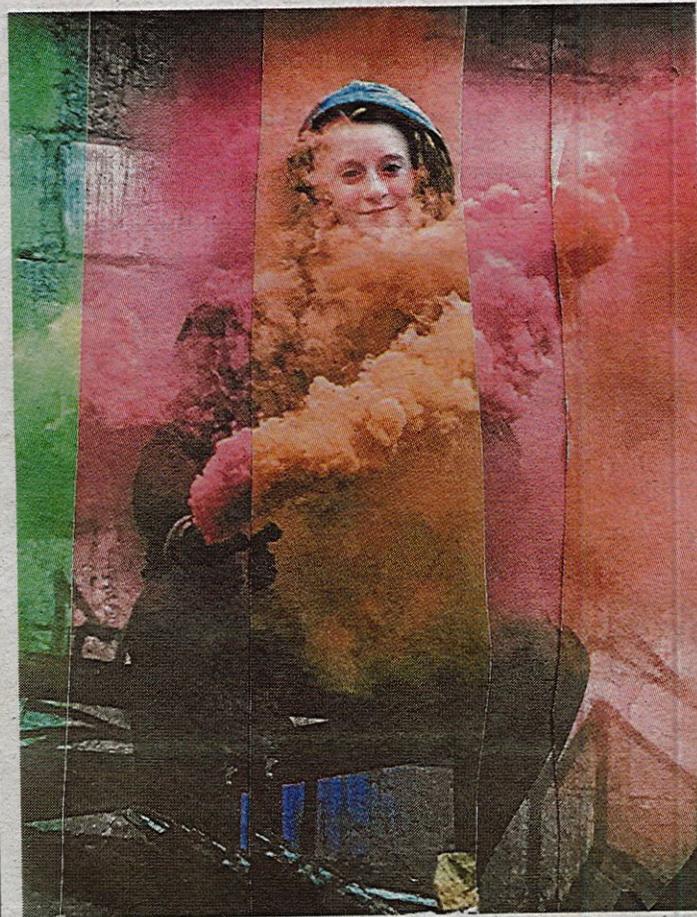
This cityscape particularly impressed the judges due to the combination of buildings from different parts of the world.



Elena Ramirez Salas, Age 14
Laude San Pedro
International
College

This painting is titled Essence of Spain. The judges enjoyed identifying possible references to flamenco and Cervantes as well as bullfighting in this painting.

SPECIAL MENTION PRIMARY ARTWORK



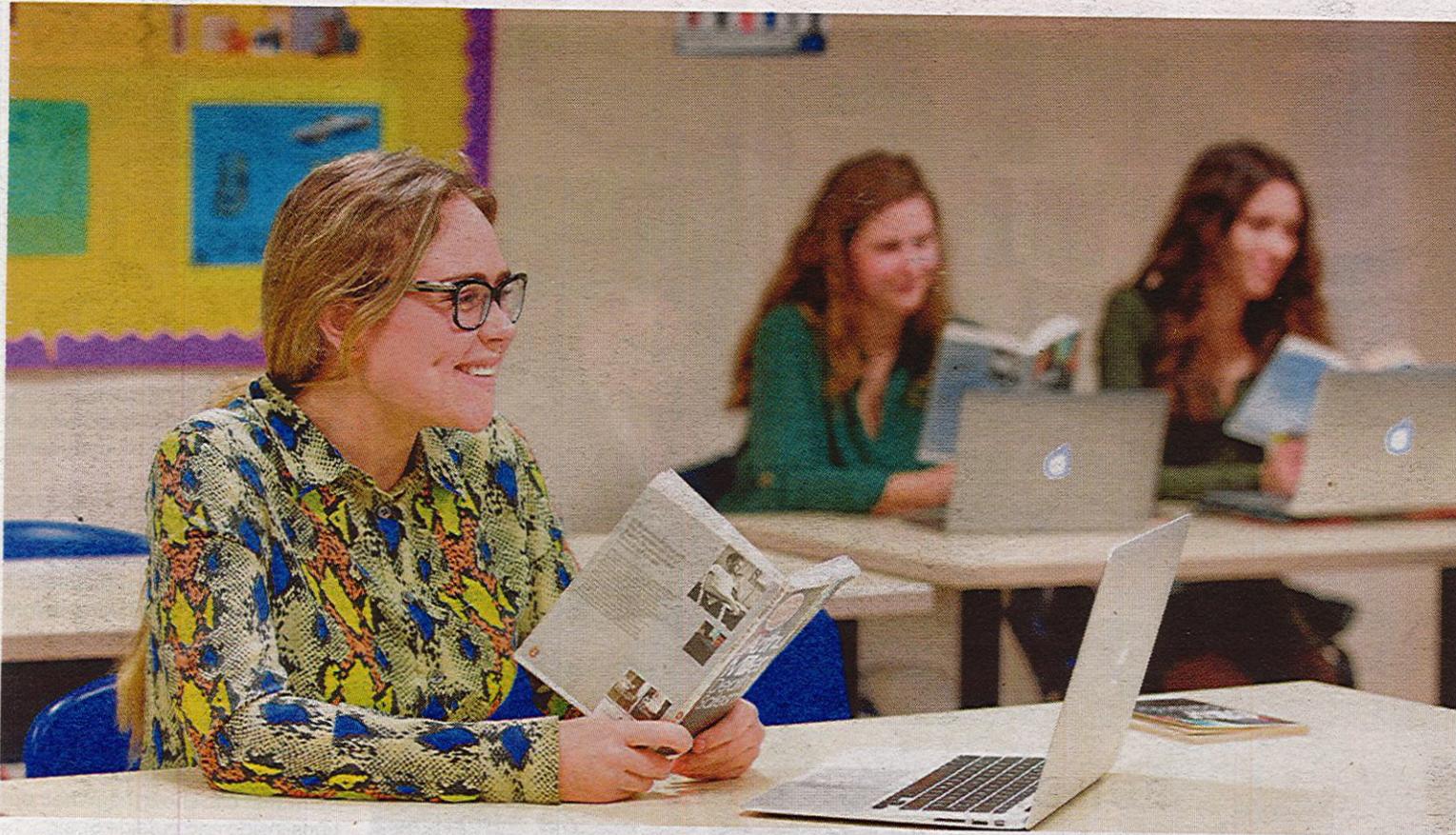
Ava Herron, Age 10
British
International
School Marbella

This work was one of several submissions that used photography, in this case exploring colour in a way that impressed the judges.



Emma García, Age 10
Novaschool
Sunland
International

This "incredibly cheerful" work is a Lucy Tiffney inspired pattern design using tempera paint and collage.



Students of Swans. Swans

PRESTIGE. The benefits of the International Baccalaureate programme with Robert King, IB Development Advisor, Swans International School

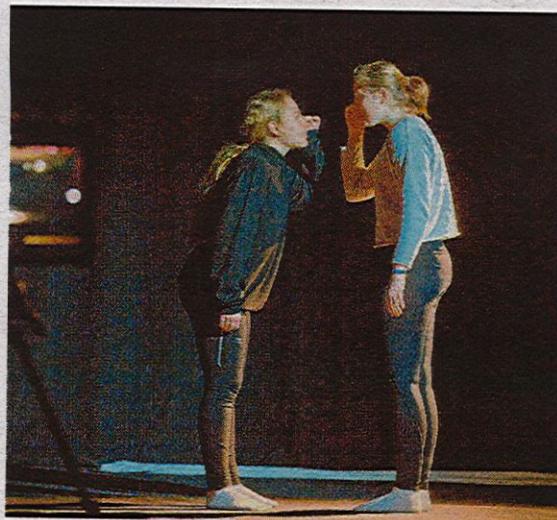
A Reflection on the Changing Face of Sixth Form Education

MARBELLA

Robert King. Twenty twenty is a symmetrical anniversary for me.

It's been twenty years since I nervously stood in front of a class for the first time and began my teaching career. For the first fifteen years I taught in England (teaching history and media studies), whilst the last five years have been here in Spain, teaching film studies, media studies and history. During my time in the UK I saw countless initiatives come and go, survived eight secretaries of state and adapted my practice to teaching different subjects and the demands of different qualifications. But it was when I first arrived in Spain, to take up my post at Swans International School in Marbella, that I had my first experience of teaching the International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Programme.

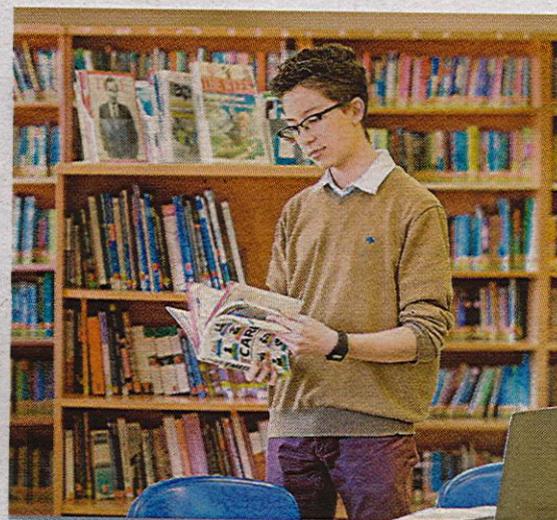
The IB Diploma is a programme that is designed to provide students at Sixth Form, who are usually sixteen years old or over, with a balanced and broad experience of a range of subjects. Based in Switzerland, it is a progressive qualification that attempts to encourage students to be open minded learners and critical thinkers, with an outward looking perspective. It's inception, fifty years ago, in the heart of a Europe recovering from two world wars, sought to educate young people in a way that would encourage international cooperation and



understanding between nations. The IB curriculum is now taught across the world and, unlike national qualifications such as GCSEs and A-levels (the two qualifications that I was most familiar with before my move to Spain), it is not bound by the demands of national policy pressure and intervention or a change of government. My former secondary colleagues back in England have seen rapid and constant change in the subjects and examinations that they teach; many would argue that this culture of 'permanent revolution' has left students and teachers alike, bewildered with what is required of them and students becoming more and more ill prepared

The IB Diploma is a programme that is designed to provide students at Sixth Form, who are usually sixteen years old or over, with a balanced and broad experience of a range of subjects

for the demands of university. Anecdotally, they see Brexit as only



exacerbating the situation, with English and Welsh secondary and Sixth Form qualifications becoming more and more inward looking.

When I started teaching film studies as part of the IB Diploma at Swans in September 2015, I realised I was dealing with a fresh new challenge that was wholly different to anything that I had taught before. The IB requires students to be much more flexible and creative in how they approach their learning. Critical thinking is at the core of the approach, as is taking risks and being independent enquirers – this is an ethos that has been fully embraced by Swans School throughout both primary and secondary.

Central to the programme is the pre-university task of researching and producing an Extended Essay (like a mini-dissertation on a topic of their choice). In addition students have to study the Theory of Knowledge (essentially a crash course in philosophy), and also engage in a range of extracurricular sporting activities, creative achievements and community work to fulfil the requirements of the other core element - Creativity, Activity and Service, or CAS for short. Students then study six subjects at either standard or higher level; these subjects span the disciplines, from their own language and a second language, to humanities, science, mathematics and the arts.

Our Sixth Form students find the programme both challenging and rewarding. The challenge they face over a two-year period is more than rewarded when they start university. More and more, it is found that students enrolled on an IB programme are better prepared for university life than students enrolled on national post-16 programmes. In addition, the drop-out rate for non-IB students has been far higher. Similar studies across the world, in Asia, Australia and the Middle East, show IB students far more 'outward looking', geared for leadership, and better able to manage their time.

For me, studies closer to home are very interesting. The English and Welsh A-levels that most children undertake in the UK (outside of Scotland) have a battle on their hands, in terms of higher education preparedness. IB Diploma students are far more likely to attend one of the more prestigious universities than their A-level studying counterpart. Forty seven per cent of IB Diploma students enrol at a top twenty British university, compared to thirty three per cent of A-level students.

At Swans, we now have students regularly gaining over 40 Points in the IB Diploma, which puts them in the top 10% of students worldwide, but what is interesting is the attention that IB students get from prospective universities who immediately recognise the academic rigour of the programme.

It is also interesting to note that the drop-out rate once at university is again lower amongst students who studied the IB Diploma; they are also more likely to leave with a first class honours degree than their A-level counterparts.

My experience supports this. As an A-level student myself in England I was wholly underprepared for my first years of university. While, admittedly, the world has changed dramatically since then (fire has been invented and church services are now in English!) one thing I know for sure is that, when I say a fond farewell to this year's Swans School IB Film students in two months time, they are going to be thoroughly prepared to succeed at university and beyond. More information: www.swansschoolinternational.es.



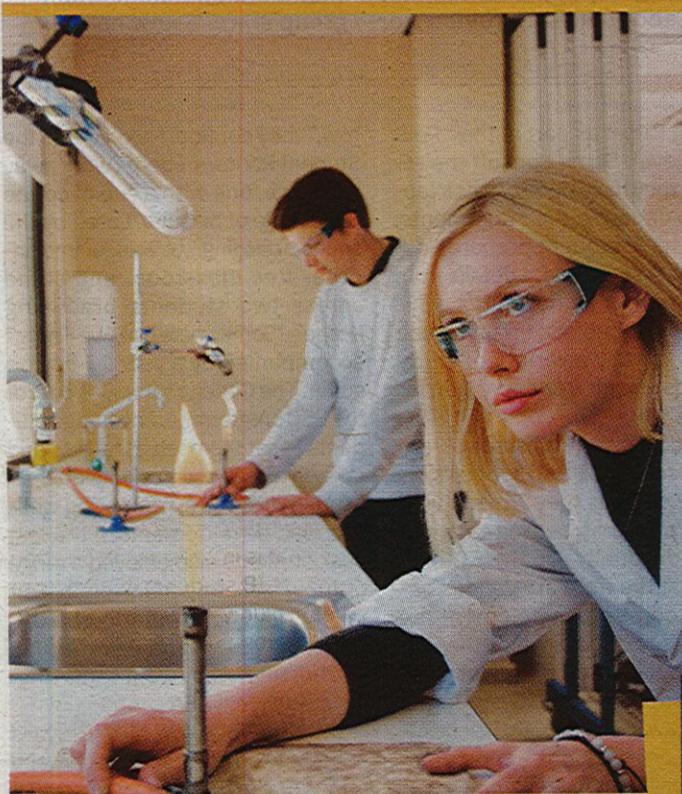
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BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

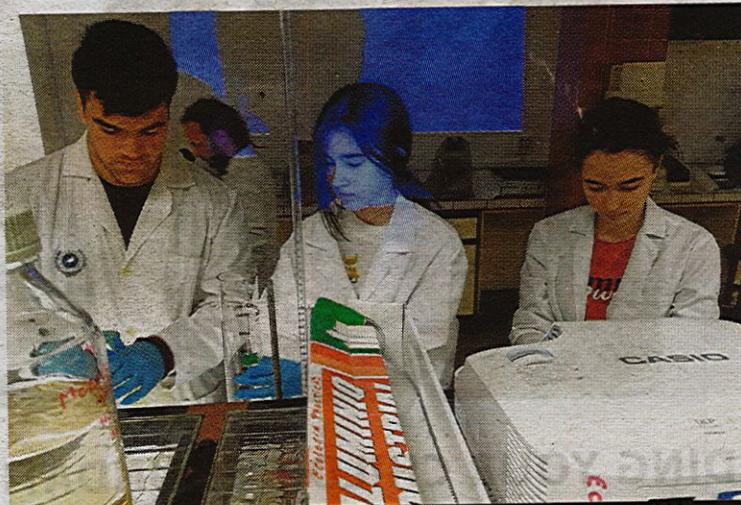
Joining forces in the name of scientific research

Students from IES Pablo del Saz and Swans School International are participating in the Science IES project

Secondary students from IES Pablo del Saz and Swans School International in Marbella have been working in collaboration with the University of Malaga (UMA) as part of the SCIENCE IES project.

The project, which was created by Javier Cáceres at the Institute of Astrophysics of Andalucía in Granada as part of PIISA - CSIC (Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas) in 2010, has expanded across Andalucía and to other cities in Spain.

Now, professors, lecturers, scholars and scientists from UMA have designed projects which allow students, teachers and scientists to



Students in the Biology Department during their first visit to UMA. SUR

get hands-on experience in a wide range of areas, including Astrology, Mathematics, Chemistry, Physics, Biology and Psychology.

Students from both schools have been able to select topics for which they will attend UMA for three days to carry out research in the laboratories. There, along-

side students from other schools (to promote social interaction and peer learning), they will work together and at the end present the outcome of their research in an oral presentation in English.

This school year 190 students will benefit from this experience in Malaga alone.



Participants read a few pages before joining a discussion. SUR

Students at British School Malaga start up book club

Two students at the British School Malaga started a book club in September which has gradually grown over the last few months.

The group started by reading Stone Cold before moving on to The Giver by Lois Lowry.

The group reads for fun - it's not about writing reviews or

essays. After reading a few pages, they stop and discuss their thoughts on how the plot has been developing, as well as the themes and style.

The current book should be finished by the end of term at which point more new members will be welcome when the group starts a new book.

SIXTH FORMS. The college offers A-level courses and PCE (selectividad) subjects for Year 12 and 13. We are an independent day-school located in the centre of Málaga

A Walk Round Phoenix College

MÁLAGA

SUR. This Spring finds this new Sixth Form College recruiting students for their third year - "And our fourth," shares Kirsty Ridyard, Co-Director. "We've been visited by lots of year 10 parents and students wanting to put their names down already for September 2021." One of the first things visitors comment on is the atmosphere - welcoming, friendly, yet focused on the prime directive of the College, which is to help each student achieve their individual best - "Be that A* or E grades," adds Miss Ridyard. "Personal growth is just as vital."

Each prospective new student and their parents have a personalised orientation meeting with the Co-Directors to discuss their goals enabling a flexible study strategy to be planned.

Beginning in the Humanities room, the domain of Co-Director James Riley, where a handful of students (the maximum class size is twelve, though the College average is closer to six or seven) are animatedly dis-



Phoenix College Málaga students and staff. MD



cussing Brexit as part of their Politics A-level. Some consult the research they have open on their laptops to underpin their arguments, others have brought prepared essays while some quote details from the morning's TV news. It's a dynamic, living subject, brought even more to life by a variety of study methods and Mr Riley's passion for debate.

Next door in the Maths room, Head of Maths Dean Clifford supports his year 12 class as they wrestle with algebra problems, helping each student individually. On the 50-inch screen at the front are various online resources to supplement the student's textbooks which the College supplies. At the back of class are a couple of year 13 students, working away quietly with their headphones on, seeking support from Mr Clifford if they need it.

In the Staff room we see evidence of another Phoenix priority; teacher support at all times. Head of English, Ms Critchley, guides a student as she wrestles with her coursework. At another desk, a year 13 student is working through some Physics problems, waiting for Alex Mitchell, Co-Director and Head of Physics, who is about to finish a class.

In a nearby free classroom, two year 13 girls are revising maths together, covering the whiteboard in impressively complex formulae, arguing in what seems like a foreign language. "We have a test tomorrow," they confide. Next door in the Student Room, students work away in silence, one with a cup of coffee & a couple of biscuits. Lured by the sound of singing, we wander into another free classroom and come across two students practising Keane's "Somewhere Only we Know," accompanied by a year 13 boy on guitar. The College tutors, as part of the PSC programme, encourage students to set themselves targets and take on extra activities outside their academic studies, promoting well-rounded development. In the last year, students also enjoyed a range of trips, including a University Fair in Madrid, Manchester in the UK, CERN in Geneva and Paintballing. At Christmas, they went carol-singing at the local AFA centre.

In the laboratory, Miss Ridyard appears to be doing something weird and wonderful with her year 12 chemistry group, though on closer inspection, the students are the ones doing all the work. "We're learning how to do titrations," they explain excitedly. Phoenix's laboratory is fully equipped so that students can carry out all the essential practical experiments in all three sciences.

On the College patio, two year 13 girls are explaining to a visiting year 11 student what life is like at Phoenix College Málaga. "As it's small, I thought I wasn't going to like it," we overhear. "But I still see all my old friends outside school and the teaching here is just fantastic. We'd rather be here than anywhere else!"

OUT OF THE CLASSROOM FOR CHARITY

Students conquer La Concha in aid of suicide prevention

A group of 70 students from the English International College climbed the mountain behind Marbella in aid of Darkness into Light

Students from the English International College set out to conquer the 1,200 metres of La Concha mountain behind Marbella for a charity challenge in January.

Nearly seventy students of all ages joined teachers for the ascent to raise funds and awareness for Darkness into Light, the global campaign for suicide and self-harm protection.

The expedition raised nearly 500 euros for the charity which supports the Dublin-based Pieta House organisation as well as the Costa del Sol mental health association Afesol.



EIC students with their certificates from Darkness into Light. SUR



The group at the summit of La Concha. SUR



Swans pupils took the cheque to the PAD shelter. SUR

School shows how correct spelling can help animals

Swans School primary pupils turned spelling into more than 5,000 euros' worth of help for abandoned animals in a recent charity initiative. The annual sponsored spell, in which children memorise 24 difficult words and were awarded donations for spelling them correctly, raised 5,169 euros for the Mijas Costa-based association PAD (Protección de Animales Domésticos).

To coincide with the event, the children gathered for an assembly in which they learned more about the hard work the volunteers put into protecting uncared-for cats and dogs, with the hope of finding them new homes. Teachers also brought in their own rescue animals in to meet the children. Some of the children visited the PAD shelter to present the donation themselves.

Covering kilometres for Save the Children

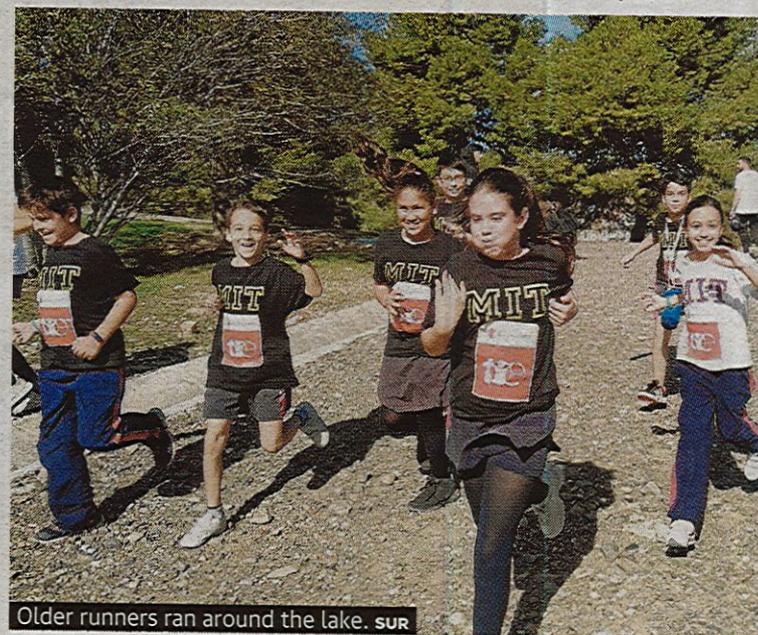
Youngsters from MIT school in Malaga donned their running shoes at the end of January for a national campaign to help Save the Children.

Pupils took part in the 'Kilometres of Solidarity' race, along with 230,000 children and 17,000 teachers at more than 800 schools around Spain for the international organisation's project to help children affected by war.

The younger children raced around the playground, while the older pupils ran around the lake.



MIT youngsters running for children. SUR



Older runners ran around the lake. SUR



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EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Performing arts students dazzle audiences with their talents at Swans

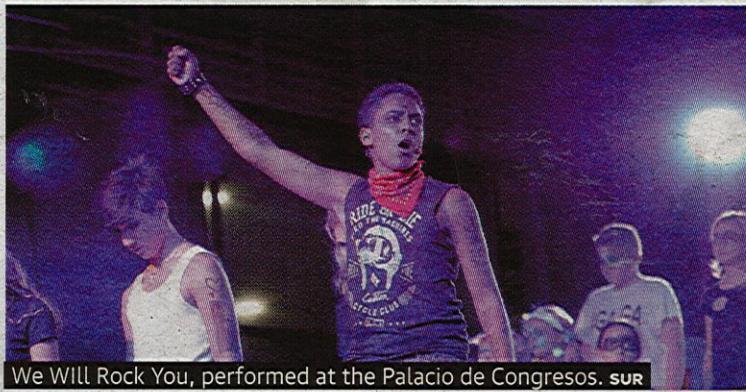
A number of events and shows have been put on by Swans International School throughout the year to showcase its students' talents. The biggest was its production of the musical *We Will Rock You*, performed on the stage of the Palacio de Congresos.

Over five hundred people got to enjoy a musical spectacular saluting the music of Queen, in which pupils from all age groups contributed, whether in creating the scenery, controlling the lighting, performing in the live band or playing a role on stage.

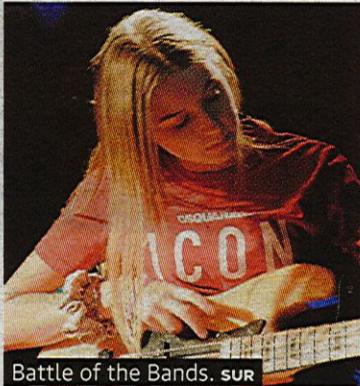
Musicians had their day too, with the Battle of the Bands, a new event added to the school's lively annual calendar. Artem and Sophie claimed top prize with their rendition of *Zombie*.

Budding filmmakers have also been recognised this year with the inaugural Swans Film Festival. Over the course of two months short films were written, scripted, filmed and edited by students from Year 3 to Year 13 in their spare time.

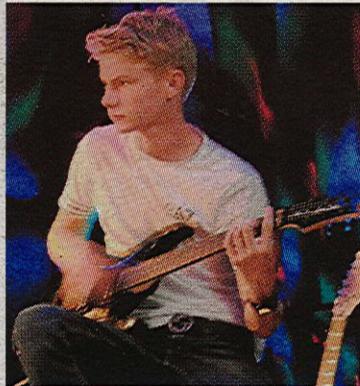
Three winners were selected from the nominated 16 by a panel of judges.



We Will Rock You, performed at the Palacio de Congresos. SUR



Battle of the Bands. SUR



All nominated and winning filmmakers. SUR



Schools from across the world participated. SUR

EIC hosts prestigious COBIS Student World Debate Competition

The English International College in Marbella hosted the prestigious Council of British International Schools (COBIS) Student World Debate Competition at the start of February.

The programme included two days of heated debates for both the Plate and Cup competitions, plus a cultural excursion day in Malaga city.

More than 100 students from

15 schools in 11 countries took part in this year's event.

The Plate final saw the International British School of Bucharest triumph over the British School of Amsterdam, while the Cup final saw St George's International School, Luxembourg, take on the British School in the Netherlands. It was the latter which won, completing a Dutch double.



The two winning Sotogrande debating teams. SUR

First Interschool Debate event showcases talents of impassioned Costa youngsters

Sotogrande International School came away with two trophies from the first Costa del Sol Interschool Debate event, hosted by Swans International School in Marbella, at the end of last year.

Four schools (Aloha College, Laude, Sotogrande International School and British School of Malaga) were invited to partici-

pate in a day that commenced with a public speaking tutorial by Kate Haycock, the school's Head of Drama.

Teams were then divided into two tournaments, separated by Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5. Subjects discussed included voting, school age, taxes and the monarchy with one team acting

in support of the motion and the other assigned to refute.

Independent judging was set for each debate, with feedback provided at the end of the session.

The final debates, including on the contentious topic of Brexit, were well-informed and passionate and Sotogrande emerged as the victors in both categories.



Swans International School's KS4 and KS5 teams. SUR