

mont21 school

Welcome to our regular update on our new eco school on the Costa-del-Sol, Spain



Our Inspirational Learning Environment v Future Pandemics

Long before the world had ever heard of the Coronavirus, we had designed a unique and innovational learning environment very different to that found in the majority of schools.

It was decided from the outset that the new school had to have a very different learning environment to compliment both the Montessori pedagogy and 21st century skills. It had to foster independence, self-responsibility, movement and be connected to nature. This has been achieved through the use of large open and flexible spaces, where the use of natural daylight and ventilation is maximised and where they are directly in contact with the outside environment through the use of large bi-folding doors. This enables the students to move freely outside during periods of independent and collaborative learning where they can choose from a variety of inspirational spaces where they feel they can best work.

It is because of this unique environment that in the event of other pandemics, it will be possible for social distancing to be achieved far easier than in a tradition school where learning space is confined to individual classrooms connected by corridors and staircases and where access to the outside is normally restricted and limited to either a playground or other hard surfaced area.

Whilst it remains unknown how the current global crises will end and when we will return to normality, it has highlighted the fact that the design of most schools is not only unsuitable for 21st century learning but also to deal with other pandemics that might lie ahead in the future.

PROGRESS OVERVIEW:

- Land identified for new development
- Architects commissioned
- Feasibility study completed
- Topographical survey completed
- Concept designs approved
- Basic project approved
- Structural Timber Design approved
- Execution project in progress

Blended Learning

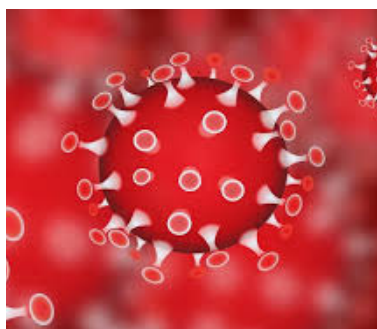
The current Covid-19 crisis has rapidly brought into the spotlight the use of online learning for children of all ages around the world. Whilst this had already been in use by many students either in schools or as full-time distance learning, it has never been considered as a viable or suitable alternative to regular face to face teaching.

It is because of this human connection that virtual learning falls short of 'real' school. It is not only academics that children need to learn but also to develop personally, emotionally and socially which are becoming increasingly important in today's ever-changing world. There is also the absence of opportunity to experience real 'hands-on' learning and to foster the 21st century skills of critical thinking, problem solving, collaboration and creativeness as well as sport and community led initiatives. However, whilst online learning will never replace physical schools for these reasons, we envisage that many schools will now introduce blended learning into their educational programs.



It had already been planned before the pandemic that blended learning - a combination of online and offline studying - would form part of our educational program for the secondary and sixth form students. This is because it ideally complements student led-learning for which they take ownership and responsibility. Their daily learning schedule will include sessions of online learning as part of project related work and where there is a greater need for subject specialism required for IGCE and A Level's. It also extends freedom of choice where the older students will have the option to work at home similar to what will likely become normal practice for most employees in the future.

The Coronavirus and Project Progress



As to be expected, the onset of the Coronavirus has seriously disrupted new developments around the world. Our new school is unfortunately no exception with the Spanish lockdown now being in its eighth week and not ending until at least May 25. However as phase one of the de-escalation plan commenced on May 11, it is hoped that face to face meetings of our project team and with outside agencies will resume in the next couple of weeks. However as a result of the crisis and the delays this has caused throughout the construction industry, it is now likely the new school will not open until September 2021.

Online Learning at Marbella Montessori School

As an alternative to students attending our physical school, we have launched a new online learning service. This will however be different to those which are presently available as it will follow a similar pedagogy to that of our physical school and mont21 where it will be primarily student-led and be a mixture of online and offline activities achieved through a personalised work plan.

To learn more visit: <https://www.marbellamontessorionline.org>__



We are now accepting pre-registrations for academic year 2021/22 on a without obligation basis. For further details, please visit www.mont21school.org or email: admissions@mont21school.org.