

SPAIN

# EDUCATION IN ANDALUSIA



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Cristina, the founder of the "Tierra y Sal" school in Chiclana de la Frontera, shares a learning moment with the children. At the "Tierra y Sal" the woods are used as a classroom.

## **In the European country that has the highest school dropout rate, new forms of education are being trialled**

- ▶ In Andalusia, the school drop out rate is one of the highest in Spain at 21.8%.
- ▶ Alternative school projects inspired by various different teaching philosophies have been developed in the region.
- ▶ The forest school and the beach school, democratic education and teaching inspired by Montessori or Steiner are just some examples.
- ▶ The University of Cadiz is studying one such school, which is called "Tierra y Sal".
- ▶ Nonetheless, Spain does not recognize alternative educational methods such as home-schooling and parent-led schools.

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One of the girls at "Tierra y Sal" plays with a tiny creature she found among the pine trees.



Children play at the “Madre de Dia” space run by Auxí, the mother of one of the girls in the group. She used to work in alternative education projects in Granada but returned to Conil de la Frontera because she feels that this area has a special energy.



Ana, an educator at the "Espacio Raices" kindergarten in Puerto Real, near Cadiz.



Conil de la Frontera. Children play at the "Madre de Dia" space run by Auxí, the mother of one of the girls in the group.

In Andalusia (Spain) two out of every ten children drop out of school before completing their education. Among the Spanish regions it has one of the highest school drop out rates (21.8%), second only to Ceuta and Melilla. Nevertheless, here in Andalusia in recent years various alternative schooling projects have been developed, both for infant schools and primaries: from forest schools to groups of families providing democratic education, to classes inspired by educators such as Maria Montessori and Rudolf Steiner.

“La casa de la Luz” in Tarifa, for example, was founded 13 years ago by three German families that practiced home schooling and today teaches around 40 children. Children like Diego, who was born in Madrid and moved to Tarifa with his parents when he was six. “My son had problems sitting still,” explains Carolina, “but here there are few pupils and, to give an example, they taught maths while doing carpentry. Elsewhere they would have diagnosed him as having attention deficit disorder. Today however, Diego is 12 years old, he has no problems concentrating and next year will transfer to a state school.”

Another example of an alternative school is “Tierra y Sal” in Chiclana de la Frontera, not far from Cadiz. Founded in 2019, it is situated in a large pine forest on the beach where the children spend their mornings learning about marine fauna, cooking bread and playing among the trees, which they have begun referring to by their correct names. Unlike in other countries, this learning method is not officially recognised in Spain but its success has attracted the interest of the University of Cadiz.



Txarly bought a hill populated with olive trees and now organizes theatre courses for children and mindfulness courses for adults. At this forest-school they believe in respectfully following nature's rhythms.



Jon, one of the educators, talks with the children at "La Jandita de Roche" school. He follows the principles of the Escuela Libre Paideia, an anarchist school that functions as a self-managing community in Badajoz.



Some children at "Tierra y Sal" climb the pine trees that grow behind Barrosa beach.



Cristina, one of the two founders of the "Tierra y Sal" school, used to work as a graphic designer in Madrid and Milan. She decided to return to her homeland of Andalusia and to create a different kind of school where she could enroll her daughter, Maren. Inma, the other founder, had trained as an educator and she wanted to create a school where nature played a central role. Two years ago they founded "Tierra y Sal".



The wooden cabin built by Belen and Ester to host the "Semillitas de la Breña" project.



Tina, aged 4, moved to Chiclana de La Frontera from Milan with her Italian parents. She attends "Tierra y Sal", one of only two infant schools in Spain that are held on the beach all year round. She is developing her curiosity and respect for nature.



Belen, the co-founder of the educational project "Semillitas de la Breña", tries to calm her crying daughter.



Carolina is the mother of Diego, who attended "La casa de la Luz", and two other children. Today she works as a secretary in the school, which means that she pays less for her children's tuition: 400 euros per child.



Nayla and Diego play at the "Espacio Raíces" kindergarten in Puerto Real, near Cadiz. The kindergarten was created inside a former restaurant where flamenco was performed.





Auxi is from Huelva and she is the head of the "Madre de Dia" project, she is also the mother of one of the girls in the group. She used to work in alternative education projects in Granada but returned to Conil because she feels that this area has a special energy.



Inma, one of the educators at "Tierra y Sal", meets Claudia, 42, to update her on how her 4-year-old daughter Tina is getting on at school. Claudia is from Milan but she and her husband decided to move away so their daughter could attend an outdoor school. The meeting takes place under one of the trees in the pine forest where the kindergarten is held in the morning.



Children play at the "Madre de Dia" space run by Auxi, the mother of one of the girls in the group. She used to work in alternative education projects in Granada but returned to Conil de la Frontera because she feels that this area has a special energy.



Ana, a pupil of the elementary school "La casa de la Luz" in Tarifa, with her mother. After attending kindergarten, Ana went to a state school for two years but didn't settle in well. Since she returned to "La casa de la Luz" she is happy and enjoying school again.



The concept of "Tierra y Sal" is that the whole area between the sea and the pine forest is a space where the children can learn through discovery. The children often move from one area to another for different activities.



Kris with his 2 children: Lota, 7, and Hugo, 5. Kris is German and his wife is Swedish. They have lived in Chiclana for 8 years and work in tourism. Lota attends the "Tierra y Sal" school, Hugo attends a private kindergarten run by a former state school teacher.



Ester, one of the co-founders of the educational project "Semillitas de la Breña". The space is intended for families of children aged 3 to 6 who want a practical and horizontal learning experience for their children in close contact with nature.



Manuel from Italy and Rocío from Spain relax with their children Leilani, 7, and Nahuel, 3. After years traveling around the world they decided to stop in Andalusia and enroll Leilani in "La Jandita de Roche", an alternative school that has been in operation for years in this area.



"Tierra y Sal". Tina, aged 4, plays among the trees while learning about the pine forest and the animals that live in it.

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