



# Newsletter No.5

July 2025



Secondary


SCHOLAEUROPAEA VARESE

As we wrap up another school year, we wish all our students, staff, and families a wonderful and rejuvenating summer break!

## Dear S7 students,


While for most students, the countdown to the summer holidays is filled with excitement, you have faced the added pressure of written and oral Baccalaureate exams. You should be very proud of your perseverance!

With the exams behind you, we hope you are feeling that summer buzz like never before! This marks the beginning of new adventures, as many of you will travel to new cities, build new relationships, and explore new interests.

We encourage you to continue with a spirit of curiosity and lifelong learning and to avoid placing limits on yourselves. We know that the skills gained during your time with us will serve as a solid foundation for your future successes. Please do come back to visit from time to time to share these with us! 

## Class of 2005 reunion

One group we recently had the privilege of welcoming back was the **BAC Class of 2005**. It was an absolute pleasure to have this cohort 'home' again. Listening to how well our alumni have fared in life and seeing them share fond memories of the school and its community created a truly heartfelt and affirming moment.

Ms Amic, our long-standing secretary and a beloved familiar face to many of our students, past and present, graciously joined the reunion. It is lovely to celebrate lasting connections and the joy of coming home again. 



## The Busted Project



It was an honour to have former student **Eva De Groeve** back over a two-week period to teach our S4 students about recognising the signs of breast cancer.

Through **The Busted Project**, of which she is a cofounder, Eva empowers women and girls to feel confident in asking questions and understanding their own bodies

A sincere thank you to Eva and the Busted Project for this experience. The students appreciated the new knowledge and long-term health is a precious gift to contribute towards.

Let's hope this is one visit of many!





# Science Symposium Successes

We are very proud of S2 students **Foivos Syrris-Tsompanopoulos** and **Miron Myroshnychenko**, for winning 'Best Prototype' for their 'Walking Electricity' submission to the **Science Symposium**.

These 'clever clogs' built their own clever clogs that charge a battery with every step! The project involved scientific theory, experimentation, and plenty of team work. They used piezoelectric materials embedded in the soles of shoes to generate electricity as the wearer walks. This electricity is then stored in a compact battery, making it a practical and eco-friendly solution for personal energy needs.

What a great team! We are excited to see what they do next.



**Best  
Prototype**

## Walking Electricity

by Foivos Syrris-Tsompanopoulos (S2ENA) and Miron Myroshnychenko (S2ENA)  
European School of Varese

**Introduction**  
We built a shoe that can produce and store electricity using a system of piezoelectric discs embedded under the shoe's insole, and conducted multiple tests to answer four questions:  
1) What is the average electricity generated when walking?  
2) What is the time and number of steps required to fully charge a 1.5F supercapacitor?  
3) What is the time and number of steps needed to fully charge a standard 1.5V rechargeable battery?  
4) What is the time and number of steps needed to fully charge an average smartphone?

**The Building Process:**

- We tested the piezoelectric discs.
- We traced the shoe's insole on a piece of cardboard.
- We cut out the traced outline and taped the cardboard to the inside of the shoe for a harder surface.
- We taped the piezoelectric discs to the hard cardboard.
- We soldered on the two pairs of diodes each to a positive and negative output.
- We added four diodes together in two pairs and connected a negative and a positive output.
- We soldered the piezoelectric discs together to form two positive and two negative outputs.
- We conducted multiple tests to evaluate the prototype's efficiency.
- We packed everything in a box.
- We soldered on the supercapacitor and the LED but we later realized that the LED would most likely burn out at such a voltage.

**What we used:**

- 1x sports shoe
- 1x hard cardboard cutout identical in measurements to the shoe's insole
- Double-sided tape
- 6x 25mm ceramic piezoelectric discs
- 1x soldering kit (containing wires)
- 4x 1N4007 diodes (to change the AC current into DC)
- 1x 16V 330F capacitor
8. Electrical tape
- 1x 5.5V 1.5F supercapacitor
- 1x LED
- 1x Precision multimeter
- 2x alligator clips for the multimeter

**RESULTS**

Energy Produced	
Amps produced (average when walking/stamping):	0.000A (1mA)
Volts Produced (average when walking/stamping):	0.16V

Charging Time and steps:			
	The supercapacitor (about 1.5 mAh)	Average 1.5V AAA rechargeable battery (about 750 mAh)	Average smartphone (about 4,000 mAh)
Time	Approximately 2 hours and 17 minutes	Approximately 750 hours (31.21 days)	Approximately 4,000 hours (5.5 months)
Steps	Approximately 7,421	Approximately 2,437,500	Approximately 13,000,000

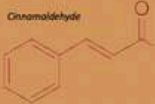
**Conclusion**  
In conclusion, our experiment was a success, and we addressed all of the questions we set out to answer. Although the integration of piezoelectric discs under a shoe's insole does not generate a substantial amount of electricity, we expect that in the future, electricity-producing shoes will become more efficient and therefore more popular.

**Fun Fact:**  
We got inspired by the Japanese piezoelectric disc used on sidewalks for harvesting green energy from people walking on them.

**Our Prototype**

**Key:**  
Red=Negative  
Black=Positive

## Upcycling Waste: The Conversion of Polystyrene Plastic into an Aromatic Flavourant



### THE AIM

To transform polystyrene, a plastic waste, into an edible food flavourant, cinnamaldehyde.

**Junior  
Finalist**

### METHOD AND RESULTS

#### 1 Preparation of Polystyrene

Polystyrene was collected, cleaned, and melted down with acetone. The mixture was then dried and ground into a polystyrene powder.



#### 2 Pyrolysis Process

The polystyrene powder was then mixed with MgO and heated up to boiling point 145°C. 21 ml of Styrene was extracted with a purity of 97%.

#### ! Surprise Glue Byproduct

An unexpected byproduct of the pyrolysis reaction: a tacky styrene-polystyrene mixture with surprisingly strong adhesive capabilities could carry up to 2kg.

#### 3 Synthesis of Cinnamaldehyde via the Vilsmeier-Haack Reaction

The extracted styrene underwent a formylation reaction to produce cinnamaldehyde.

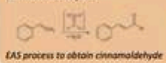
##### THE VILSMEIER-HAACK REACTION

Dimethylformamide and phosphorus oxychloride were mixed in an ice bath at 1300 RPM, then added to the styrene at 70°C to form the Vilsmeier reagent.



##### SYNTHESIS OF CINNAMALDEHYDE VIA HYDROLYSIS

The compound underwent multiple heating and cooling cycles to complete electrophilic aromatic substitution (EAS), thus converting the mixture into cinnamaldehyde.



#### 4 Purification and Separation

The product was purified through distillation, then left at 4-6°C overnight and finally washed with diethyl ether and water using a separatory funnel.

The resulting liquid has a strong cinnamon scent.

### CONCLUSION

The experiment successfully converted polystyrene into cinnamaldehyde, but further refinements in reaction conditions, purification, and process optimization are needed for practical application. The glue byproduct needs further investigation.

MATEJ HRADEC  
S2ENA  
ES Varese

**Matej Hradec** in S2 also did us so proud at the Science Symposium, becoming a **junior finalist** for his project 'Upcycling Waste: The Conversion of Polystyrene Plastic into an Aromatic Flavourant'.

Matej's innovative project tackled the pressing issue of plastic waste by exploring a method to transform polystyrene, a common pollutant, into a valuable resource. Through a series of chemical processes, he successfully converted the plastic into an aromatic liquid with a strong cinnamon scent and an unexpected glue byproduct with strong adhesive properties.

Congratulations to Matej on his fantastic work! Thank you to the teachers and lab technicians for the great support they provided these students, particularly Rolando Cavagnoli who accompanied them on the trip and their Integrated Science teacher, Prof.Dudal.



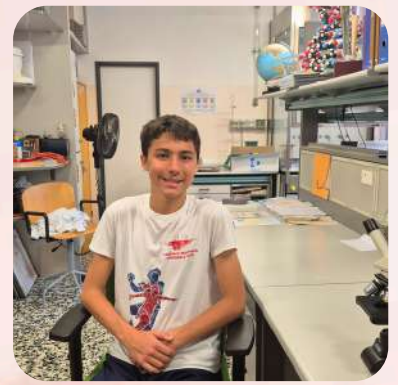
# Kangaroo Qualifiers

We are proud to announce that two of our students have achieved outstanding results in the **Kangaroo Mathematics Competition!**

The students advanced to the semifinal, which took place on 24 May in Milan. A huge congratulations to **Michal Benassi** (S2ITB), who qualified in the **Benjamin** category and **Lorenzo Jimenez Solazzi** (S3ITB), who qualified in the **Cadet** category.

We have since had more fantastic news, with Lorenzo Jimenez Solazzi qualifying for the final! 🏆

This is an impressive achievement for our young mathematicians and we are extremely proud of their hard work. A special thank you to Prof. Ferrone and all who supported them in their efforts.



## S5s Joining the JRC



We are incredibly grateful to the **Joint Research Centre** of the **European Commission** for welcoming 39 of our **S5 students** for a two-week immersion into the world of work. Hosted in Ispra, Italy, this unique opportunity offers students firsthand experience of the diverse and impactful work carried out at the heart of the European Commission. From research and innovation to policy and sustainability, they're getting a real taste of life inside one of Europe's leading scientific institutions.

A huge thank you to everyone at the JRC for making this possible!

← BACK Throwback to 1960: Our connection with the JRC goes back over six decades, making this placement not just an opportunity, but a continuation of a long-standing relationship rooted in shared values and educational collaboration.

A heartfelt thank you to everyone at the JRC for your continued support and for inspiring the next generation!





# Our Very Own Student Authors!

Our library was so proud to host a fantastic book event featuring two talented students who have published novels in the fiction genre. **Emma Montaleone** from the Italian section (**S4**) and **Sofia Baj** from the Anglophone section (**S6**) presented their work to an audience of their peers, and gave insights into their writing process.

Emma presented '**Anthology 2024**': samples of creative writing curated over a year, giving the reader a glimpse into the evolution and variety of her writing. Her style is recognisable for common threads of fantasy, suspense, and authentic young adult characters.

Sofia presented '**The Isa: The Mystery of The Watch**', an exciting detective story and the first in the ISA (International Spy Academy) series. Her writing takes us on a journey around the world, featuring vivid settings and interesting characters.

Students were captivated by the stories these young authors had to share and the insights provided into the creative process. The event not only celebrated the achievements of these exceptional students but inspired others to pursue their own creative expression. 🖋️



Well done to all our talented writers and artists in **S1-S3**, many of whom had their work published in this year's **Writing Fest** ebooklets. We had another fantastic year, with students expressing themselves in multiple languages and creating beautiful illustrations to complement the themes of '**What sustains us?**' and '**Discovery**'.

Many thanks to Prof. Weinberger for coordinating. To read the Writing Fest booklet collection for a particular language, contact the participating teacher.





## Collaborate and Create!



The **S4 French L2 students** have been working on a **collaborative project** with a class from **ITET High School in Varese**. Under the guidance of their teachers, Prof. Bedani (French teacher at ITET) and our own Prof. Benaouda, they developed a colourful exhibition centred around the **Paris 2024 Olympic Games**. Their impressive pieces were displayed in the atrium for all of us to enjoy.

After fantastic engagement from students and new connections made, another joint project between the two schools is anticipated for next year. We are sure it will be another creative feat!



## 'Libera' against the Mafia

On the 10<sup>th</sup> of June on the invitation of Prof. Miranda, two local representatives of the association **Libera**, **Loredana Ruggero** and **Antonella Buonopane**, agreed to meet **S2 ITA**, **S3 ITA** and **S3 IT** students for two discussion sessions in our library. **Libera** promotes education on the rule of law and is committed to activities aimed at countering the mafia's control over the territory. It was a great opportunity for our students to discuss this topic. Thank you to **Libera** and Prof. Miranda for providing an important learning opportunity.



## Resisting Facism Talk



**Professor Giovannetti** from **Istituto Parri** delivered an insightful lecture focused on Fascism, particularly highlighting the **Resistance movement** against it here in Italy.

While students possess a solid understanding of Fascism, they often lack knowledge about those who opposed it. This event proved to be both informative and engaging, featuring archival footage and a lively question-and-answer session. Students actively participated, and demonstrated their understanding through thoughtful questions.



Our sincere thanks to Professor Giovannetti for sharing his expertise and shedding light on this crucial aspect of history. A special thanks also goes to our librarian, Francesco Scmazzon, and Prof. Esposti Ongaro for their efforts in coordinating this event.



We are happy to report that we have been certified a **Green School** for 2024 - 2025. This was a collaborative effort from school staff, AGSEV, the pupils' committee and the student body.

We will continue to develop initiatives as part of our **'Build The Future We Want'** project that ensures the nurturing of green competences across all pillars of our school. We are proud of our community's commitment and look forward to continuing our journey towards building a sustainable future.

Some important sustainability initiatives we want to make more of a habit in 2025 - 26:



**Walk to School**

**Book Swap**

**ESV's Community Exchange App**

**Download O-Marché app**

**Group ID: Venica**

**Code: 379-011-968**



**Repairing rather than throwing away, with Prof. Vis' team.**



**Reusable water bottles**



**Reducing plastic wrapping**

If you have any additional ideas or want to help promote these ones, the **BTFWW Committee** and **Membro Ecologico** would love to hear from you!



## Maris Project Update

Our **Erasmus MARIS** team traveled to beautiful **Malnate** recently to collect **water samples**, as part of their investigation into microplastics. Click on the smart phone image to watch the fantastic footage captured by drone, and enjoy a glimpse into the equipment and processes involved.

Erasmus MARIS have contributed a lot to our school this year, learning from Marine biologists in Valencia, investigating the levels of microplastics in our water supply, and presenting their experiments and findings to students and members of our wider school community. Well done to a great team of students and their excellent teachers.

The S6 expert group has been diligently training the new S5 team to familiarise them with the processes involved in this vital project. We look forward to seeing next year's progress!

## Hands-on Ecology

As part of an **ecology** project, our **S3 students studying science through Dutch** have been putting their learning into action by reviving the garden beside our sports hall.

The result are these tomatoes and beans; the real "fruit" of their hard work and collaboration! 🍅

It's great to see project-based learning and sustainability come together in such a hands-on and rewarding way. Well done to the class and their dedicated teacher, Prof. Bortels.





We are pleased to share the resounding success of our recent Erasmus+ mobility project that connected students from the **Evangelical Gymnasium** in **Banská Bystrica** with peers from our school. This exchange program was a truly enriching experience for all participants. Through shared activities, education, and cultural discovery, students formed new friendships, strengthened their language abilities, and gained valuable insight into each other's traditions and daily lives. Programs like these highlight the power of international cooperation and the importance of intercultural understanding in today's world.

## Week 1 – Italy 🇮🇹 (June 3-6)

Our visitors participated in a rich educational program hosted by our school, immersing themselves in our unique learning culture.

- Lessons included Chemistry, Economics, English, Integrated Science, Visual and Music Arts, Physics, Mathematics, and Protestant Religion, providing insight into a wide range of teaching styles. 📚
- Students enjoyed our unique multilingual focus and the opportunity to develop language skills. 🗣️

## Week 2 – Slovakia 🇸🇰 (June 8-12)

In the second phase, our students paid a return visit to Slovakia, where they had the opportunity to experience the educational setting at Evangelical Gymnasium and enjoy a vibrant cultural program coordinated by our wonderful Professor Tomáš Škraban.

### Sunday, June 8th – Arriving in Bratislava

- Transport to Banská Bystrica.
- A stroll through the historic city centre
- A visit to the Evangelical Gymnasium.

### Monday, June 9

- Zvolen Castle. 🏰
- Relaxation at the thermal spa in Kováčová. 🌊
- Traditional Slovak cuisine in a local restaurant.
- The historic Slovak National Uprising Memorial
- The unique wooden articular church in Hronsek.

### Tuesday, June 10th – rich mining heritage

- The UNESCO-listed town of Banská Štiavnica
- Lake Počúvadlo and a descent into a historic gold and silver mine. ⛏️

### Wednesday, June 11 – Immersion in school life

- English-taught lessons across disciplines 🎓
- School band performance 🎵
- Traditional lunch
- An afternoon at Bratislava Zoo. 🐾

### Thursday, June 12 – Sightseeing in Bratislava.

- Views from the UFO Tower on the SNP Bridge
- The ruins of Devín Castle
- Visit to Bratislava Castle.
- A walk through the historic centre of Bratislava





# Residential Trips



Residential trips in S3 and S6 play a vital role in the European School curriculum, nurturing teamwork and resilience while exemplifying learning beyond the classroom. We sincerely thank our wonderful students who wholeheartedly embrace these trips as opportunities to make new friendships, strengthen class bonds, and tackle new challenges together. We also appreciate the accompanying teachers who dedicate time away from friends and family to provide our students with these valuable experiences.

Here are some **vibrant snapshots** of four trips that took place this year:

- **Trentino:** S3 students learned about local flora and fauna, braved exhilarating heights at an adventure park, enjoyed energetic rafting and mountain biking, and visited Ötzi the Iceman at the Museum of Archaeology in Bolzano. A highlight was a rejuvenating walk through the Riva di Tures waterfalls.



- **Naples:** Another S3 group gained insights into the rich history and culture of Naples, engaging in archaeological and al fresco workshops, exploring the city centre and its fascinating subterranean systems, and visiting the ancient ruins of Pompeii. In the evenings, games and discos helped strengthen team spirit and created a fun, communal atmosphere.



- **Varazze:** Over a wonderful week, the students' activities focused on water sports at the Lega Navale di Varazze. Led by highly skilled young instructors, and benefiting from ideal weather conditions, they learned and practised sailing, SUP (stand-up paddleboarding), and canoeing. It was exciting to see them sailing alone in boats for the first time in their lives, with impressive proficiency. One day was dedicated to an ecological and naturalistic excursion to Portofino and the Gulf of Tigullio, among the most beautiful and renowned locations in Italy.





● **Palermo** : An S6 group took a journey through nature, history, and culture, combining a guided tour of Palermo's historic centre with naturalistic experiences led by an environmental guide. A particularly meaningful moment was the visit to the Zingaro Nature Reserve, along trails winding through Mediterranean scrub, ending with a swim in a scenic cove. Another moving moment was the visit to the Felicia and Peppino Impastato House of Memory, where a testimony from Mrs. Impastato served as an important moment of reflection for the students on our legal system and the struggles fought by young people like our students, who, in recent times, have battled against mafia influence.



We hope our S3 and S6 students carry the lessons learned from these trips forward, growing together as compassionate peers and inquisitive, collaborative learners.

## Cronos House

**S2 German students** put their problem-solving skills to the test at Cronos House escape room. Students had a fantastic time working together to decipher the clues. The outing also included some fun playing together in the park and a tasty trip to Buosi gelato shop.



## Climbing to the top



Congratulations to **S2 students in the Francophone and Anglophone sections** who demonstrated their physical prowess in indoor climbing. With the guidance of wonderful instructors, students wholeheartedly engaged in the activity and did a wonderful job!



## Sacro Monte Memories

**Our first-year German students** enjoyed a wonderful team-building hike to **Sacro Monte**. After reaching the top, students took a break to enjoy the reward of breathtaking views and delicious gelato.

The students made the most of the experience: persevering, supporting each other and making it a memorable and fun outdoor day for everyone.







## Fremona Waterfall

On June 17th, **Spanish S1L1** students had the opportunity to visit the **Fremona waterfall** in the town of Ferrera de Varese with their teacher, Prof. Morales López, and a parent. The students had the chance to learn about the surrounding area of Varese and enjoy a fun day focused on developing social and civic skills.



## S2 Latin Trip

Our **S2 Latin students** had a culturally enriching experience at the **Museo Archeologico di Varese** in May. They demonstrated exemplary behaviour, engaging enthusiastically during the guided tour of the museum's Roman section.



We were fortunate to have two expert guides from Archelogistics, who engaged and inspired our young learners, one group receiving guidance in Italian and the other in French. This trip was a fantastic opportunity for our students to expand their understanding of Roman history and culture, and we are incredibly proud of their curiosity and conduct. 🇮🇹

## Golf and Orienteering



In May and June, in the scenic setting of **Luvinate Golf Club**, the final phase of the multidisciplinary **golf and orienteering project** promoted by the **Physical Education** and **Human Sciences** departments took place. 🏌️

The project, involving all S1 students across language sections, has been well-received by students and teachers alike.

This is an excellent example of cross-curricular planning, grounded in a holistic approach that encourages stewardship of our natural environment while we enjoy it. 🌿

The initiative aims to promote outdoor physical activity through golf and orienteering, connecting these sports disciplines to key concepts in the Human Sciences curriculum, such as spatial awareness and interaction with the environment, providing students with a comprehensive and dynamic educational experience. It's also a lot of fun!



# A Fond Farewell

Sadly, we are saying goodbye to many friends, students, and colleagues this summer. This year is especially challenging as we bid farewell to Ms. Amic, our lovely school secretary, who has been such a warm, welcoming and dedicated presence for countless students, staff, and families. We wish all departing students and staff the very best in their future endeavours and hope they will come back often to tell us all about them. Here are some of our colleagues' departing words to our students:

## Prof. Pirrami :

Seguite le vostre attitudini,  
impegnatevi per il vostro  
futuro e per quello del  
pianeta che vi ospita.

## Prof. Leavey:

When the dust settles, you may  
ask yourself the questions:  
Will I be something?  
Will I become someone?

And the answer is:

You always were.

You are.

And you still have time to be.

## Prof. Vincent :

"L'esprit de l'homme a trois  
clés qui ouvrent tout : le  
chiffre, la lettre, la note.  
Savoir, penser, rêver. Tout  
est là." (Victor Hugo, *Les  
Rayons et les ombres*,  
Préface).

**Prof. Digangi:** Dear ragazzi, the moment has come to say  
goodbye: I'm sorry I can no longer accompany you on your  
journey, but I carry you in my heart and I wish you a future full  
of satisfaction, realised dreams, and an abundance of joy.

Thank you to Prof. Bondieck, **European Spirit Coordinator**, who  
organised a lovely **End-of-the-Year Party** for our final day in  
school featuring gelato from Colombo, barbecue sausages,  
outdoor games, a karaoke stage and a volleyball match between  
pupils and teachers. We also thank our skilled **maintenance  
team**, and Prof. Winston who acted as MC for the karaoke stage.

As we celebrate another school year coming to an end, we value  
the friendship, support and inspiration provided by so many in  
our school community. While saying goodbye is bittersweet, we  
have made strong connections that we know will endure.

## Prof. Futasova:

The best moments for me  
were with my students in  
class, and I will keep you in  
my heart forever.

## Prof. Dell'Uomo :

Cari ragazze e ragazzi,  
fate buon viaggio nella vita,  
abbiate venti favorevoli per  
le vostre vele.

## Prof. Padinger :

Die Zusammenarbeit mit so  
vielen verschiedenen  
Nationen hat mir viel Freude  
bereitet und den Unterricht  
so bunt, abwechslungsreich  
und spannend gemacht. Ich  
habe viele wertvolle  
Erfahrungen sammeln  
können! Vielen Dank und  
das Beste für euch.





**BE** Join us  
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AGSEV warmly  
welcomes and supports  
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**Participate:** Make a difference  
**Celebrate:** Get involved in our events  
**Integrate:** Become part of the  
community  
**Exchange:** Be part of the European  
Schools' network  
**Welcome families:** Contact us for  
any inquiries  
**Extracurricular activities:** Enrich your  
children's education



## Mensa Announcement



The **Cooperativa Mensa** are excited to share that next school year, there will be a **new service provider** at the school who **will prepare meals in the school kitchen**.

They will be able to reveal the provider's name and next year's plans once the contract is signed, but they are very confident that this will be a positive change that will greatly improve both food quality and service. Remember to sign up by **the 10<sup>th</sup> of July**.

The **Board of the Cooperative Mensa**, who are parent volunteers, have done an outstanding job in scrutinising several proposals and choosing one to best meet the needs of our families.

We are grateful to these essential members of our community for being so generous with their time and energy.

## National Celebrations



Viva la Repubblica!

02/06

Glædelig Grundlovsdag!

05/06



Schéinen Nationalfeierdag!

23/06



Glad nationaldag!

06/06

Vesel dan državnosti!

25/06



Feliz Dia de Portugal!

10/06



Sretan Dan državnosti!

25/06

Gelukkige Nationale feestdag!

Joyeuse Fête nationale!

Frohen Nationalfeiertag!



21/07

Bon 14 Juillet!

14/07



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School calendar

