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insight

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JANUARY 2026 • ISSUE 25

A Magical Christmas Performance:
A Snowman at Sunset
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Head of School Message



Welcome to the Winter 2025 issue of Insight, our first edition of 2026. As we begin a new calendar year together, this issue of Insight offers us a valuable moment to pause, reflect and celebrate the many achievements, stories and shared experiences that define life at ISB.

Looking back over 2025, we have much to be proud of. Our IBDP cohort achieved truly exceptional results, including a perfect score – the only one in Romania – and six students achieving 40 points or above. These outcomes are not only a testament to the hard work, resilience and ambition of our students, but also to the steadfast support of parents and the dedication and professionalism of our teachers. I would like to extend my sincere thanks to all of you for the role you have played in supporting our young people to reach such heights.

At ISB, we remain firmly committed to the holistic development of every student. While academic excellence is an important part of our mission, it is only one aspect of a much wider educational journey. Through our character education programme, we continue to nurture the values of Honesty, Empathy, Responsibility and Open-mindedness, ensuring that our students grow not only as learners, but as thoughtful, caring and principled individuals. We are proud to be the only international school in Romania recognised as a Character School, and we see this not as a badge, but as an ongoing responsibility to live these values in all that we do.

This commitment to character, diversity and open-mindedness was beautifully embodied in our International Day this term. It was a perfectly organised celebration of the rich cultural milieu that has formed at ISB over many years. Students, parents, staff and friends of the school came together to share traditions, languages, food, music and stories from around the world. The day was not simply about showcasing difference, but about fostering dialogue – listening to one another, appreciating each other's heritage and recognising that our diversity is one of our greatest strengths as a community.

I would also like to express my gratitude to our new PTA members, who have stepped into their roles with energy, generosity and a clear sense of purpose. They have worked in close partnership with the school to represent the voices of both parents and teachers, always with the flourishing of our students at heart. Their support, ideas and commitment are deeply appreciated, and I look forward to continuing this collaboration in the months ahead.

This term, we also marked Ziua Națională a României, Romania's National Day on December 1st, with celebrations across the school. Our students and staff prepared assemblies, performances and activities that highlighted the extraordinary cultural and historical heritage of Romania. For many of our international families, it was a meaningful opportunity to better understand the country that is home to our school; for our Romanian students, it was a moment of pride and shared identity. I am grateful to everyone who contributed to making these celebrations so memorable.

On a personal note, I was honoured to meet more than 20 ISB alumni this term in Belgium and the Netherlands, in cities such as Brussels, Maastricht, Groningen and Amsterdam. We also had the pleasure of joining the National Day celebration in Amsterdam, with traditional Romanian food, music and culture bringing us together far from home. These encounters were a powerful reminder that once you are part of ISB, you remain part of the ISB family. It is a source of immense pride for us to witness the success of our former students as they continue their studies, build their careers and contribute to their communities around the world. We are very much looking forward to welcoming many of them to our Alumni Reunion on 23rd December, a special occasion to reconnect and reflect on how their journeys began here at ISB.

No reflection on this term would be complete without mentioning our wonderful Winter Fair. It was, once again, a joyful highlight of the season – filled with creativity, generosity and a true sense of community. My heartfelt thanks go to all parents, teachers, students and staff who contributed their time, energy and talent to make the event such a success.

As we look ahead to the coming weeks, I would like to wish the very best of success to all our students who are preparing for their IBDP and IGCSE mock examinations. These assessments are an important stepping stone, offering students the chance to practise, reflect and refine their approaches before the final examinations. Please know that the whole school community stands behind you, confident in your abilities and ready to support you.

Thank you, once again, for your continued trust, partnership and support. I hope you enjoy this Winter issue of Insight, and that it offers you a meaningful window into the learning, character, diversity and community spirit that define ISB.

With warm regards,

Serdar Sakman
Head of School





Nurturing Potential, Celebrating Growth



The Primary School at ISB continues to be a vibrant learning community where every child is valued as an individual and encouraged to discover their own strengths. Rooted in the belief that learning happens through joyful curiosity, our approach combines rigorous academic foundations with purposeful inquiry, creativity, and character development.

We believe that children learn best when they feel safe, seen, and inspired. Every day at ISB, classrooms are filled with questions, exploration, collaboration, and opportunities to make real-world connections. Our goal is not only to help learners know more, but to help them do more, care more, and become more.

The first term has been marked by energy, growth, and a positive spirit of collaboration between students, teachers, and families. Classrooms have been alive with curiosity as children inquired into real-world ideas, made connections across subjects, and took increasing ownership of their learning. From the early stages of literacy in EY classes to the confident research projects of our upper primary students, it has been inspiring to see how our learners approach challenges with creativity and a willingness to try.

This year, we have continued to strengthen our academic pathways, with visible student progress in reading, writing, and mathematics. Inquiry units have encouraged students to explore environmental sustainability, cultural identity, innovation, and the power of community.

Our STEAM focus has been present across year levels, with hands-on projects, design challenges, and coding experiences that gave students the opportunity to think critically and express their ideas in new ways. Alongside this, our wellbeing approach has remained central to daily life, ensuring that every student feels safe, supported, and empowered to bring their full self into the classroom.

Our curriculum embraces the whole child—mind, heart, and body. Through authentic and engaging learning experiences, students develop essential skills that prepare them to navigate a rapidly changing world:

- comprehensive academics that build strong foundations in literacy, numeracy, and scientific thinking
- inquiry-driven learning that fuels curiosity and problem-solving
- STEAM integration across subjects with hands-on design and creation
- inclusive classroom practices that honor each student's abilities, background, and identity
- a strong wellbeing program fostering emotional intelligence, empathy, and confidence
- dedicated English language support to ensure access for multilingual students

We celebrate the diverse voices in our school and encourage all students to take ownership of their learning journey.

Our Primary community has also achieved a number of milestones that reflect our shared commitment to excellence. The expansion of learning support and English language pathways has ensured greater access for all students, while new collaborations between specialist subjects have enriched learning experiences far beyond the traditional classroom setting. Celebrations such as International Day, cultural events, and student-led initiatives have brought families together and highlighted the diversity that strengthens our community.

The success of these initiatives is a result of dedicated planning, expertise, and the passion of the staff who believe deeply in the potential of every child.

As we reflect on this term, it is clear that the achievements we celebrate are not the work of individuals alone, but the result of a dedicated team moving in one direction with a shared purpose. Teachers have worked tirelessly to support each learner's unique journey. Students have shown resilience, kindness, and curiosity. And families have partnered with us through trust, encouragement, and active involvement in school life. Together, we are building a Primary School that values learning not only as a set of outcomes, but as a meaningful, joyful, and inclusive process.

As educators, we see ourselves as partners in your child's growth. We listen, guide, and challenge students to take risks, build resilience, and approach their learning with confidence. We are continually evolving as a school—adapting our teaching, refining our curriculum, and embracing new ideas so that ISB remains a place where learning feels alive.

We are proud of everything our students have achieved so far, and we look forward to the months ahead with excitement and purpose. Together with our families, we are building the foundations for lifelong learning.

Going through the pages of this magazine one more time before it goes to print, I am amazed by the amount of work everyone in the school has contributed this term and I am grateful and honoured to work alongside such a wonderful team. Thank you all for your hard work and commitment to the school's overall success. I hope you will enjoy reading this edition of Insight as much as I did. I would like to express my special thanks to the authors of the articles and to the editor of our magazine, Ms. Madalina Cioc, for her dedication, thoughtful guidance, and excellent work in making this publication possible.

Mustafa Soydemir
Head of Primary

Early Years Language Superstars!

"From tiny words to full sentences, the children are gaining confidence, expanding their vocabulary, and developing the building blocks for lifelong literacy."

This term, our Early Years children have been having a blast with Box Clever, our fun and engaging language intervention. Each day, they've been diving into exciting play worlds – from the farm to the Arctic, the safari, and even the changing seasons – while building their speaking skills step by step.

At ISB, we know that the early years are a golden window for language development. Children's brains are rapidly growing, and the foundations laid now support everything from communication and confidence to later reading and writing. That's why our approach combines structured learning with imaginative play: when language is woven into meaningful experiences, children remember it, use it, and make it their own.

Here's how their week of word magic works:

- **Monday (Noun)**: Meet the star of the day – *elephant!*
- **Tuesday (Adjective)**: Make it sparkle – *big elephant!*
- **Wednesday (Verb)**: Add some action – *the big elephant jumping!*
- **Thursday (Adverb)**: Make it move – *jumping slowly!*
- **Friday:** Put it all together – *The big elephant is jumping slowly!*

This simple, playful structure helps children understand how sentences grow and how words work together. By revisiting vocabulary throughout the week in different contexts, they build stronger connections and deeper understanding – all while having fun.

It's incredible to see how far they've come. From tiny words to full sentences, the children are gaining confidence, expanding their vocabulary, and developing the building blocks for lifelong literacy. Every play session is a chance to imagine, communicate, tell stories, and proudly show off their new language skills – and we couldn't be prouder!

Charlene Lee Jones
EYFS Coordinator





Hands-on Phonics Learning in Year 1

"Lessons are active and engaging. Children handle magnetic letters, build words with tiles, practise reading with decodable books, and take part in quick-fire games that reinforce their learning."

In Year 1, phonics is very much a hands-on, practical experience. Our children are grouped according to their reading level and individual needs, which means each child receives targeted teaching that helps them make steady, confident progress.

Working in small groups allows teachers to focus closely on the specific sounds, skills, and strategies that each child needs next. Children who are just beginning to blend receive plenty of support and modelling, while those ready for more challenges can move ahead at an appropriate pace. This approach ensures that no child is left behind and no child is held back.

Lessons are active and engaging. Children handle magnetic letters, build words with tiles, practise reading with decodable books, and take part in quick-fire games that reinforce their learning. These practical tasks help children internalise phonics patterns in a meaningful way, keeping them motivated and involved.

Most importantly, this approach nurtures a genuine love of reading. When children feel successful and see themselves improving week by week, they become more eager to pick up a book and read for pleasure. Our goal is not only to teach the mechanics of reading, but to open the door to a lifetime of confidence and curiosity.

Sian Cresswell
Year 1 Teacher



Exploring the World of Animals in Year 2

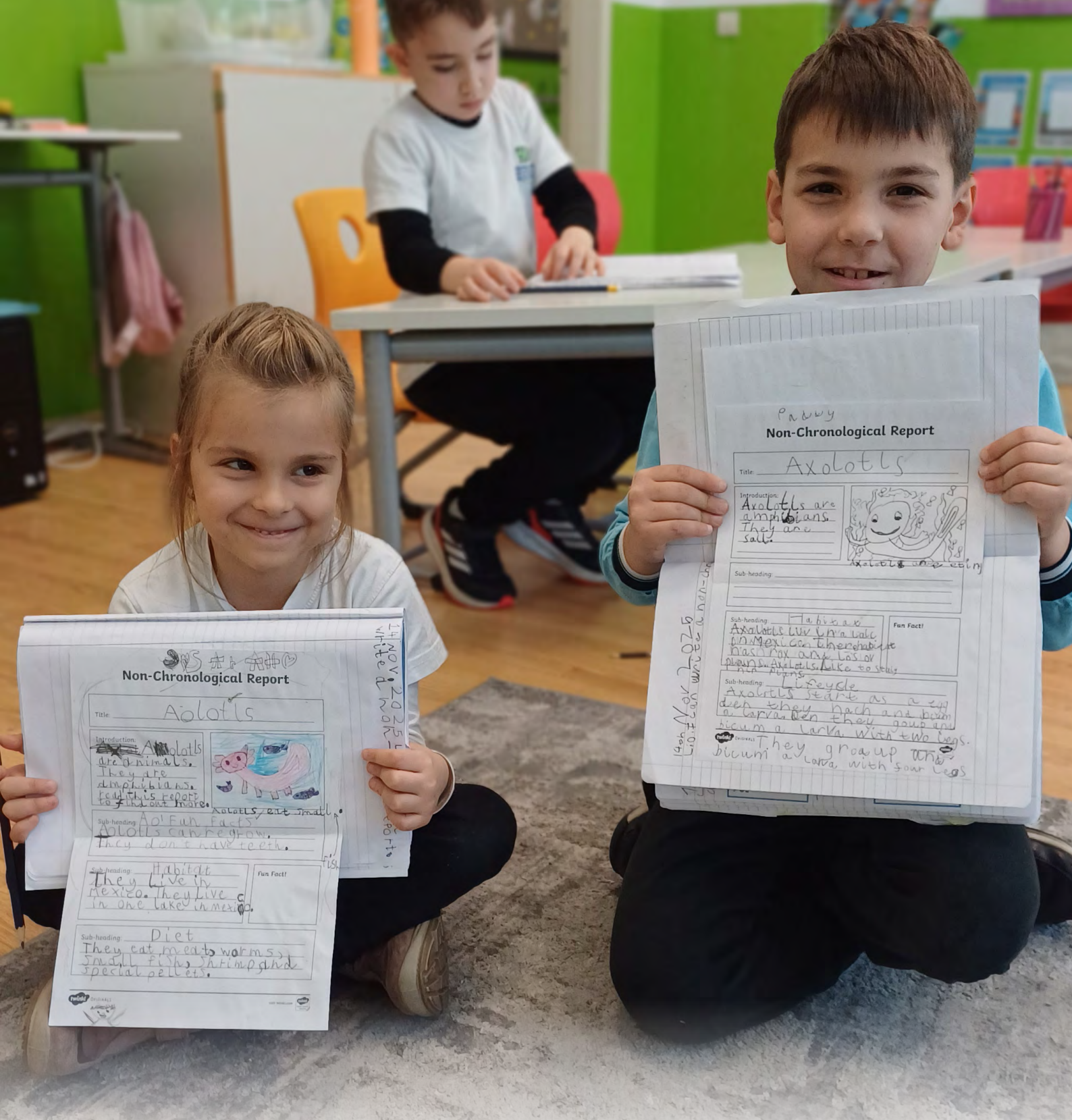
"The children have learned how to classify animals into groups, explore where different animals live, and understand the clever adaptations that help them survive in their environments."



This term, Year 2 has been busy becoming young zoologists, scientists, and explorers. Our learning across Science and English has revolved around one exciting theme: animals.

In Science, we have been studying the units *Living Things and Their Habitats* and *Animals and Wildlife*. The children have learned how to classify animals into groups, explore where different animals live, and understand the clever adaptations that help them survive in their environments. One of their favourite activities was our blubber experiment. Using vegetable fat to mimic a layer of fat, we compared temperatures using thermometers, to gain quantitative data, and also tested how long our hands could stay in icy water with and without this "blubber glove", to gain qualitative data. The children were amazed to feel just how much extra warmth the fat layer provided - just like it does for polar animals such as seals, whales, and polar bears.

We also expressed our learning through art by creating beautiful animal-inspired pieces, from rainforest creatures to Arctic wildlife. In celebration of Iceland International Day, we carried out the famous Coca-Cola and Mentos eruption to find out how geysers work. Although very different from our animal studies, we used this experiment to think about how some animals - like puffins and Arctic foxes - live in places shaped by powerful natural forces. It was a fun, memorable way to make links between science, geography, and our animal theme.



Our recent English work has also connected with our science learning. Using books, videos and websites the children researched a wide range of animals. They learned how to gather facts, take notes, and turn their knowledge into their own non-chronological reports. Their writing has shown fantastic growth, with clear organisation, interesting facts, captioned diagrams, and confident use of subject vocabulary such as *habitat*, *carnivore*, and *adaptation*.

It has been a wonderful term full of curiosity, creativity, and hands-on discovery. Year 2 should feel very proud of everything they have achieved as scientists and writers!

Daniella Marie Diovisalvi

Year 2 Teacher

Discovering the Stone Age Year 3's Journey Through Time

"The students completed an exciting Project-Based Learning (PBL) task at home. They created wonderful pieces that showed everything they had learned — from fact files and timelines to 3D models of Stone Age houses, caves, animals, tools, and jewelry."





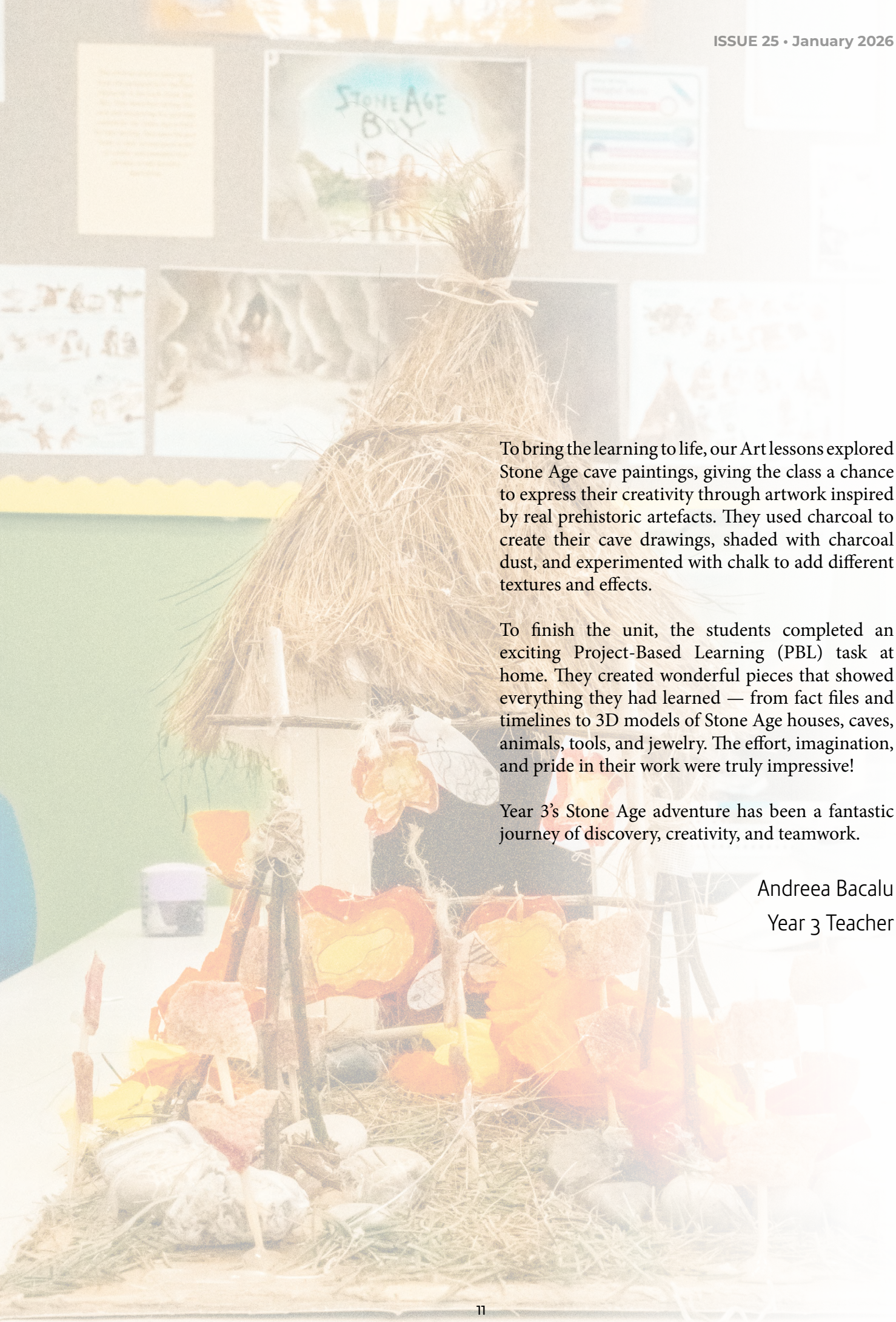
This half term, Year 3s have been travelling far back in time — all the way to the Stone Age! Through our Humanities unit, we explored what life was like thousands of years ago, learning how early humans lived, hunted, and built their homes.

We began by looking at a timeline to understand the three main periods of the Stone Age — the Palaeolithic (Old Stone Age), Mesolithic (Middle Stone Age), and Neolithic (New Stone Age). The children were amazed to see just how long ago it all began and how much human life changed over time.

The class learned that early humans were hunter-gatherers, moving from place to place to find food. They hunted animals such as mammoths, woolly rhinoceroses, deer, and bison, and gathered berries, nuts, and plants. In the later Stone Age, people discovered how to farm, which meant they could settle in one place and build permanent homes.

We also explored the different types of houses that Stone Age people built — from simple caves and tents made from animal skins to more developed stone and wooden huts during the Neolithic period. The children compared these homes to our houses today and discussed how life must have felt so different back then.

Our English unit has been closely linked to this topic through the story Stone Age Boy. In this unit, we learned about the different jobs people had during the Stone Age and how these roles helped them survive. The children wrote a diary entry from the boy's perspective, imagining his experiences and daily challenges, while building their descriptive writing skills and creativity.



To bring the learning to life, our Art lessons explored Stone Age cave paintings, giving the class a chance to express their creativity through artwork inspired by real prehistoric artefacts. They used charcoal to create their cave drawings, shaded with charcoal dust, and experimented with chalk to add different textures and effects.

To finish the unit, the students completed an exciting Project-Based Learning (PBL) task at home. They created wonderful pieces that showed everything they had learned — from fact files and timelines to 3D models of Stone Age houses, caves, animals, tools, and jewelry. The effort, imagination, and pride in their work were truly impressive!

Year 3's Stone Age adventure has been a fantastic journey of discovery, creativity, and teamwork.

Andreea Bacalu

Year 3 Teacher



Learning, Sharing, and Growing A Look at ISB Primary School Assemblies

"Assemblies are more than just a routine; they are a vital part of our students' personal and social development."

At ISB, our weekly Primary School assemblies—held separately for Lower and Upper Primary, with occasional whole-school gatherings—play an important role in building community, sharing learning, and celebrating achievements. We host a mix of teacher-led assemblies, often linked to special events or celebrations, and class assemblies in which students prepare performances for their parents and peers. Assemblies also provide a space to recognise student success through awards such as **HERO of the Week/Month**, **Multiply Your Superpowers** for times-table quizzes, academic certificates, and acknowledgements for outside achievements. Once a term, students meet in their House Teams to discuss important matters, vote for prefects, and plan activities for events like the Winter and Summer Fairs. We also hold behaviour-themed assemblies, such as anti-bullying sessions, to promote wellbeing and reinforce our school values.

Assemblies are more than just a routine; they are a vital part of our students' personal and social development. They provide a structured space for children to practice public speaking, build confidence, and learn essential communication and leadership skills. By participating in and observing assemblies, students develop a sense of responsibility, empathy, and teamwork, while also understanding the importance of celebrating the achievements of others. This shared experience helps foster a strong sense of belonging and school spirit, reinforcing the values that guide our community every day: Honesty, Empathy, Responsibility and Open-mindedness (HERO).

Guzel Mirashova
Year 4 Teacher

How Interlocking Cubes Help Year 5 Understand Maths

"Maths is about exploring and understanding, not just memorising and calculating".

Year 5 students took a hands-on approach to learning square and cube numbers using colourful interlocking cubes. By physically building shapes, the children were able to see the patterns and relationships in numbers in a way that purely written exercises sometimes fail to capture.

"Seeing the cubes stack up really helped me understand why 8 squared is 64," said Aaron, excitedly showing his 8x8 square. Erin added, "I didn't know a cube number could look like a tiny tower. Making 2 cubes into a tower of 8 cubes made it so much easier to imagine!"

The activity not only made abstract concepts tangible but also encouraged collaboration and discussion among the students. Using physical objects in lessons helps students develop a deeper understanding of mathematical ideas, improves spatial reasoning, and keeps engagement high.





Hands-on activities like these are essential in maths lessons. They allow students to explore, experiment, and make mistakes safely, reinforcing learning through doing rather than just observing. By building square and cube numbers themselves, Year 5 students are developing both confidence and competence in their mathematical thinking.

When children can manipulate and see numbers in 3D, it turns something tricky into something exciting. They remember it longer and understand it better. Maths is about exploring and understanding, not just memorising and calculating.

As these young mathematicians continue to explore, the interlocking cubes have proven to be a simple yet powerful tool for turning numbers into tangible learning experiences. The activities proved that with curiosity and teamwork, maths can be both meaningful and enjoyable!

Dana Breitenhofer

Year 5 Teacher



Year 6 Explorers: Linking English and Humanities through Discovery

In Humanities, students investigated the question: How do modern explorers compare to past explorers?

They researched historical figures such as Christopher Columbus, Marco Polo, Captain James Cook, and Vasco da Gama, alongside contemporary explorers including Ed Stafford, Sir Edmund Hillary, Mae Jemison, Teodor Negoiță, and Jessica Watson. Pupils compared their journeys, motivations, challenges, and impact, recording findings in topic books and creating comparison tables. Working in pairs and small groups, they produced creative projects (posters, diaries, videos, and role-plays) highlighting similarities and differences across time, culminating in engaging presentations to classmates.

In English, the class explored Michael Morpurgo's Kensuke's Kingdom, analysing language, making inferences about characters, and studying the impact of figurative language. Pupils learned to write diary entries, including from different points of view, and developed ambitious vocabulary and varied grammatical structures.

Their writing culminated in independently planned, drafted, and published diary entries, demonstrating increasing proficiency for different audiences and purposes.

Complementing these units, the Anywhere Island Project Based Learning homework allowed pupils to imagine and design their own islands. They researched locations, mapped geographical features, created species fact files, and developed a national identity complete with flags and laws. The project encouraged problem-solving, creativity, and cross-curricular skills, giving every child a sense of ownership and pride in their work.

This integrated approach provided a rich, engaging learning experience, combining historical knowledge, literacy, creativity, and critical thinking—all inspired by the spirit of exploration.

Joseph Edge
Year 6 Teacher and
Deputy Head of Primary School



ISB ECO Team: One Action at a Time

"Empowering students to lead meaningful environmental change across the campus."

Have you ever heard of ISB's ECO Team? Many students and parents may not realise just how many impactful initiatives the school is involved in to raise awareness about environmental issues. The ISB ECO Team is a passionate and dedicated group of students, committed to building a culture of responsibility and environmental consciousness throughout the campus. Through their creative projects, campaigns, and hands-on activities, they motivate students to think more deeply about global challenges such as climate change, resource conservation, and the protection of natural ecosystems.

With a strong focus on sustainability, the team helps the school community understand the importance of making smart, eco-friendly choices. Whether it's reducing waste, improving recycling habits, or exploring greener energy use, the ECO Team shows how even the smallest daily actions can make a meaningful difference. Each class has at least one enthusiastic representative, forming a dynamic and collaborative team that brings together students of various ages and unique perspectives.

These members take the lead in planning initiatives, organising environmental projects, and creating the eye-catching posters seen around campus- ensuring everyone stays informed and inspired to live more sustainably.

Since the beginning of the school year, the ECO Team has been busy launching a series of engaging activities designed to help students better understand their environmental impact. One of the first major initiatives was ISB's participation in **World Cleanup Day**, an event that energised the entire school community. Volunteers worked together to sort waste into the correct recycling bins, ensuring that paper, plastic, metal, and other materials were properly separated.

This hands-on experience provided students with a clearer understanding of why correct waste sorting matters. They learned how each material requires different processing and how mixing them incorrectly can make recycling less effective. By participating in the cleanup, students began to realise that simple habits- like placing items in the right bin- truly add up. The event also shed light on how quickly waste accumulates and emphasized the importance of maintaining a clean, sustainable campus environment.

Throughout the year, the ECO Team has planned an exciting lineup of activities to strengthen environmental awareness and encourage students to take action. Student participation is especially meaningful- when students are excited and engaged, the message of sustainability becomes more powerful and enduring.

To foster this engagement, the team organises **school assemblies**, **interactive presentations**, **and hands-on activities** that are as educational as they are enjoyable. These events give students the opportunity to learn in active and dynamic ways, rather than passively. From participating in eco-challenges and watching informative videos to attending workshops and joining group discussions, each activity is designed to deepen understanding while sparking curiosity. The ultimate goal is to not only teach important concepts but to inspire students to apply them in their daily lives.

In conclusion, ISB's ECO Team continues to play an essential role in shaping a more environmentally conscious school community.

Through teamwork, passion, and a commitment to meaningful action, they demonstrate that real change begins with small steps taken together. By engaging students in interactive events, hands-on experiences, and ongoing projects, the ECO Team empowers young people to make thoughtful, responsible choices that benefit the planet. Their enthusiasm and leadership show that when a community comes together in the spirit of sustainability, the impact can reach far beyond the school walls. With continued involvement from students, staff, and families, ISB is building a future where environmental responsibility is not only taught—but proudly lived every day.

Daria Maria Vernea

President of ISB's Eco School



Celebrating World Food Day with Healthy Habits

"ISB joined the global celebration of World Food Day, held under the inspiring theme "Hand in Hand for Better Foods and a Better Future."

World Food Day serves as a reminder of the importance of making healthy choices, reducing food waste, and appreciating the resources that sustain us. It also encourages our students to reflect on how their everyday actions can help create a more sustainable planet.



Fruit Salad Fun (Primary) – Linked to the canteen's "Eat a Rainbow Every Day" project, encouraging healthy habits from a young age!

To mark the occasion, students from primary school took part in a fruit salad–making activity, supported by the school's eco reps and secondary student volunteers. This hands-on experience tied in beautifully with the Canteen October project: "Eat a Rainbow Every Day," promoting the value of healthy and colourful eating habits. The activity not only filled the canteen with bright fruits and cheerful teamwork but also reminded everyone that nutritious food can be both fun and delicious.

Introduced this year, the Eco Committee launched a Waste Reduction System aimed at helping students reduce waste and act responsibly in the canteen. Eco reps were on duty to assist their peers with separating recyclable items and collecting food leftovers, ensuring that everyone contributes to a cleaner, greener school environment.

This system will help reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill and encourage everyone to think twice before throwing things away. Over time, it will also provide valuable data for the Eco Committee to monitor progress and find new ways to make ISB even more eco-friendly. The Waste Reduction System is more than a set of bins — it's a step toward building a culture of environmental responsibility.

Through these meaningful activities, ISB students learned that small actions—whether chopping fruit, sorting waste, or donating a can—can make a big difference. Together, the ISB community truly embodied this year's message: working hand in hand for better foods and a better future.

Dana Breitenhofer

Eco Coordinator for Primary School



Canned Food Collection Campaign – Eco Committee ready to deliver the food donations which will support Feed the Hungry UK and their partner in Bucharest



Exploring Our World: Science Teaching in the ISB Primary Department

"At the International School of Bucharest Primary Department, our approach to science is centred around helping children explore, question, and make sense of the world around them."

We want pupils to develop curiosity, confidence, and a secure understanding of scientific ideas through meaningful, engaging lessons.

To support consistency across year groups, we use the White Rose Science materials as a framework for organising topics and progression. These resources help ensure that concepts are introduced in a logical order and revisited over time so that pupils build on what they already know. Teachers adapt and add to the materials to meet the needs of their classes, making sure lessons remain practical, accessible, and enjoyable.

Practical learning plays an important role in science across the Primary Department. Pupils have regular opportunities to investigate, test, observe, and record results. Whether they are exploring materials, studying living things, modelling the Earth and space, or looking at forces in action, hands-on experiences allow children to apply scientific ideas in meaningful ways. These activities also help build skills such as communication, problem-solving, and working collaboratively.

Because vocabulary can sometimes be challenging—especially for pupils learning English as an additional language—we take time to introduce and revisit key vocabulary throughout each unit. Teachers use visual examples, discussion, and modelling to help pupils use scientific terms confidently and accurately.

Lessons are broken down into clear steps to support understanding, and teachers regularly check learning through questioning, quick activities, and class discussions. This helps identify misconceptions early and ensures pupils stay on track. Retrieval tasks are also built into lessons so students can revisit previous learning and strengthen long-term understanding.

Across the Primary Department, we aim to make science feel relevant and connected to pupils' everyday experiences. Children learn how science relates to the environment, technology, their own bodies, and the world around them. We also provide opportunities beyond the classroom—such as STEM weeks, practical workshops, visiting speakers, and collaborative projects—which help deepen pupils' interest and engagement.

Overall, our goal is to help pupils become confident young scientists who are curious about how things work and eager to explore further. The structure we use simply supports this wider aim, allowing teachers to focus on creating meaningful, engaging science lessons for every child at ISB.

Cathryn Quinn
Primary Science Coordinator

Swimming and Tennis Lessons at ISB: Supporting Healthy, Active Lives

"At ISB, our Physical Education curriculum reflects our commitment to developing confident, capable and active young people. "

As part of this ongoing work, we are pleased to highlight the opportunities our students enjoy through our Swimming and Tennis programmes; key elements that enrich their learning and support their long-term wellbeing.



Throughout Term 1, our Upper Primary students visited the World Class swimming pool in MegaMall, an excellent facility that provides a safe and professional environment for high-quality instruction. Lessons were delivered by an experienced swimming coach, and all sessions were offered at no cost to parents. Swimming remains an essential part of our curriculum; it is a compulsory requirement of the British National Curriculum, a vital life skill, and an outstanding form of exercise that promotes both safety and strong physical development.



Our Lower Primary pupils also continued their work with a specialist tennis coach, developing early skills that support coordination, confidence and resilience. Tennis encourages discipline, focus and sportsmanship; it also helps children learn to manage both success and challenge. Equally important, it strengthens communication and teamwork, skills that extend well beyond the court.

By continuing to invest in these programmes, we are ensuring a forward-looking PE curriculum that nurtures healthy habits, builds character and supports every child in leading an active and balanced life.

Joseph Edge
Deputy Head of Primary School

Unlocking Potential Beyond the Classroom: The Power of ISB's Enrichment Programme





At the International School of Bucharest, learning does not end when the lesson finishes. Curiosity, creativity, and exploration continue to unfold through our vibrant Enrichment Programme—an initiative designed not only to extend student learning, but to help every child discover what excites them, challenges them, and makes them feel proud of what they can do. Every Wednesday, our students participate in a compulsory enrichment session carefully crafted to nurture talents, build new skills, and offer a safe and inspiring space to "try something new."

Alongside this programme, our extensive extracurricular activities, available after school, provide additional opportunities for students to deepen their passions, strengthen discipline, feel part of a team, and experience the joy of personal achievement.

The Enrichment Programme sits at the heart of our ethos: education should enrich the whole child. It should spark curiosity, promote self-expression, build confidence, and help young people develop the resilience to take risks and step outside their comfort zone. By offering a wide range of experiences—spanning arts & crafts, sports, music, languages, STEM, and drama—we ensure that every student can find something that resonates deeply with them. Whether they are meticulously sketching a new design, experimenting with 3D printing, preparing a recipe, rehearsing a rhythm, or mastering a new language, the programme is built to celebrate individuality and foster growth.

Across all areas of the programme, one theme stands out: the students' enthusiasm. They arrive eager, energised, and ready to dive in. Teachers report that enrichment sessions are marked by curiosity, positive energy, and a willingness to experiment—even when something feels new or challenging.

Extracurricular Activities: Enriching Life Beyond the School Day

While the Wednesday Enrichment Programme is compulsory, our extracurricular activities are voluntary—and yet they continue to attract a good number of eager participants.

Students choose to stay after school because they want to grow, explore, and challenge themselves in areas they love. These activities allow students to deepen their interests, build strong relationships, and practise discipline and dedication.

This term, our extracurricular programme includes: karate, basketball, gymnastics, piano, drums, fiber art, football, ki aikido.

Parents have shared how excited their children are to attend, discussing their progress at home and proudly showing new skills they have learned. This excitement is a powerful reminder of why enrichment matters. It offers students a chance to discover new passions, a safe space to explore talents, a break from routine that inspires creativity, the confidence that comes from mastering new skills, opportunities to collaborate, communicate, and connect, experiences that build character and resilience. Most importantly, enrichment sparks the belief that learning is a lifelong adventure—not something confined to textbooks or timetables.

Enrichment as a Pathway to Personal Growth

The Enrichment Programme at ISB is more than a set of activities. It reflects our commitment to educating the whole child and recognising that every student has unique interests, abilities, and potential waiting to be uncovered.

From arts and sports to languages, STEM, music, drama, and beyond, the programme allows students to step into new roles, challenge themselves, and shine in ways that traditional lessons might not always reveal. Our extracurricular activities further deepen these opportunities, providing valuable learning moments after the school day ends.

We are proud of how enthusiastically our students engage in enrichment and extracurricular activities, and we remain committed to expanding these programmes to meet their evolving interests and passions.

Together, with the support of teachers, parents, and the school community, we will continue to nurture talent, inspire creativity, and unlock the potential within every student.

Ingrid Stanciu

Head of Enrichment Programme









SPOOKTACULAR HALLOWEEN CELEBRATIONS LIGHT UP OUR PRIMARY SCHOOL!

This year's Halloween festivities were nothing short of spooktacular across the entire Primary School and EYFS! From dazzling costumes to incredible pumpkin creations, our students showcased talent, creativity, and boundless Halloween spirit.

Celebrating Our Competition Winners

A huge round of applause goes to the winners of our Halloween Costume and Pumpkin Carving Competitions! Every student who took part brought imagination, effort, and originality to the event. From spooky ghouls and enchanting witches to funny pumpkins and artistic masterpieces, our school was transformed into a Halloween wonderland.

A heartfelt thank you to our dedicated teachers, supportive families, and enthusiastic students. Your teamwork and joy turned this celebration into a memorable school tradition.



EARLY YEARS & LOWER PRIMARY: A FRIGHTFULLY FUN HALLOWEEN PARTY



Our youngest learners stole the spotlight during their Halloween Party performance! The stage came alive with little witches, cheerful monsters, and imaginative creatures who sang, danced, and filled the hall with laughter. Their energy and creativity made Halloween a magical celebration for everyone watching.



PUMPKIN MAGIC IN FOUNDATION STAGE 2

FS2 students have been hard at work getting into the Halloween spirit! Their pumpkin-carving session resulted in a fantastic collection of funny, spooky, and wonderfully creative designs. These bright orange masterpieces are now ready to shine in the Annual Halloween Pumpkin Competition.

Judging will take place tomorrow across the entire Primary School. We wish the best of luck to all our young pumpkin artists—may the most creative carving take the crown!





UPPER PRIMARY: A FANG-TASTIC SHOWCASE OF TALENT

Upper Primary students brought both charm and chills to the stage with their remarkable Halloween showcase. Dressed as witches, clowns, wizards, and eerie characters of all kinds, they impressed the audience with confidence, teamwork, and show-stopping performances.

This celebration wasn't just about costumes or frightening fun—it was a reminder of the imagination, courage, and unity that make our school community so special.





Welcoming a New School Year: Reflections from the Admissions Office

The start of a new school year is always one of the most energising and rewarding moments in the Admissions calendar—and the lead-up to this September was no exception. This year, we proudly welcomed **around 100 new students** into our ISB community. While most began their journey with us at the start of September, several families joined later in **October and November**, adding fresh perspectives and energy as the term progressed.

Throughout the summer, the Admissions Office remained open and active, meeting prospective parents, answering questions, and guiding families through the registration process. Summer at ISB has its own unique rhythm: quiet classrooms awaiting new voices, the dedicated work of our maintenance team preparing the school for the months ahead, and the building excitement of welcoming learners who will soon fill our hallways. It is always a privilege to be the first point of contact for incoming families and to support them as they take their first steps toward joining our community.

A major highlight of our preparations was the **New Student Induction Day**, held on **August 29th**. Designed to help new students and their families feel informed and at ease, the event offered opportunities to meet teachers and members of the School Leadership Team, explore classrooms, and enjoy guided tours led by our enthusiastic ISB Student Representatives. The warmth and positivity shared throughout the day set a truly encouraging tone for the year ahead.

We know that transitioning to a new school—sometimes even a new country—can feel both exciting and overwhelming. That's why our Admissions team, together with the support of teaching and non-teaching staff across all departments, works tirelessly to make every family feel welcome from the moment they arrive. Whether it's offering reassurance, answering questions, or simply greeting students with a friendly smile, our goal is always the same: to ensure each child's transition into their new environment is as smooth and comfortable as possible.



As the school year has settled into its rhythm, it has been wonderful to see our new students forming friendships, exploring interests, and becoming part of the vibrant ISB community. Their curiosity, resilience, and enthusiasm remind us why this work is so meaningful.



And while September marks the beginning of the academic year, the work of the Admissions Office is far from seasonal. We continue to review and accept applications throughout the entire year, often welcoming additional students in **January, February, and March** as families relocate or pursue new opportunities. At the same time, planning for the **2026–27 school year** is already underway, ensuring that our processes remain seamless, supportive, and aligned with the needs of our growing community. This year-round cycle of outreach, evaluation, and preparation is at the heart of our mission—and it is one of the many reasons our work remains dynamic and rewarding.



As we look ahead, we remain committed to supporting every new family who walks through our doors and to helping each student begin their ISB journey with confidence, excitement, and a strong sense of belonging.

Tatiana Buyuklieva
Admissions Manager

Strengthening Excellence: Preparing for Exams, Celebrating Achievements and Reflecting on Outstanding Practice



Preparing for the IBDP, IGCSE and A Level Mock Examinations

As we approach the upcoming IBDP, IGCSE and A Level mock examinations, our Secondary School is entering a crucial and rewarding phase of the academic year. This period represents an essential milestone for our students, offering them the opportunity to consolidate their learning and experience the structure and expectations of formal examinations. Our dedicated team has been working with exceptional commitment to ensure that every learner feels well supported and academically prepared. Through our data driven target setting system, combined with the significant effort, adaptability and pedagogical expertise of our teachers, students have been able to refine their study strategies, address learning gaps and develop a stronger sense of exam readiness. These mock examinations provide our learners with a meaningful and realistic opportunity to test themselves within a fully authentic assessment environment, enabling them to reflect on their progress and further build their confidence as they advance towards their final examinations.

University Offers and Student Achievement

Our Year 13 cohort has already begun to receive outstanding recognition from highly regarded universities around the world. Considering the courses our students have applied for, institutions such as the University of Oxford, the University of Manchester and Bocconi University are among the top fifty globally, reflecting the competitive nature of the programmes they aspire to join. Receiving early offers from such prominent universities is not only a testament to our students' academic dedication and personal resilience but also an indication of the strength and consistency of the educational foundation they have built throughout their years at ISB. We are immensely proud of their achievements so far, and we look forward to celebrating further success as more offers are confirmed in the coming weeks.

Appreciation for Our Teachers, the Career Counselling Department and Parents

At this important stage of the school year, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to all our teachers, who work tirelessly, day after day, to help each student reach their full potential.

Their unwavering commitment, innovative approaches and relentless pursuit of excellence play a vital role in shaping the academic and personal growth of our learners. I would also like to extend my gratitude to our Career Counselling Department, whose expert guidance, personalised support and deep understanding of global university systems are instrumental in helping our students navigate the complexities of the application process. Furthermore, my heartfelt thanks go to our parents, whose trust, encouragement and continuous engagement form an essential partnership in our shared mission. Their belief in our school, their support for our teachers and their dedication to their children's success make a profound difference in all that we do.

CIS Preparatory Visit Recognition

In addition to the busy and exciting developments within our Secondary School, we recently received the official report from the CIS Preparatory Visit. We are pleased and proud to share that our school's practices and educational approaches were described as outstanding.

This commendation highlights not only the high standards we uphold but also the collaborative culture and strong sense of purpose that guide our daily work. Such recognition affirms the exceptional professionalism of our staff, the clarity of our strategic direction and the consistency with which we strive to provide an enriching, inclusive and forward thinking learning environment. This achievement is a reflection of the collective effort of our entire community and stands as a reminder of what we can accomplish when we work in harmony toward a common vision.

Looking Ahead

As we continue through this dynamic and meaningful part of the academic year, we remain committed to nurturing a school environment in which every student can thrive, grow and excel. With the combined strength of our students, staff and families, we look forward with optimism and confidence to the successes yet to come.

Oytun Pekel

Head of Secondary School



IB and Cambridge A Levels at ISB — Two Pathways, One Commitment to Excellence



At ISB we believe that one size does not fit all. That's why we offer both Cambridge A Levels and the IB Diploma Programme, so that each student can choose the path that best aligns with their strengths, interests and future ambitions. Each programme brings unique advantages; together, they reflect our commitment to supporting diverse learners and helping students reach their full potential.

Why Offer Two Programs?

Students come with different goals, learning styles, and post-school plans. Some already have a clear idea of what they want to study at university, while others want to keep their options open. By offering both IB and A Levels, we give students the freedom to choose the path that fits them best. This dual-offering means no student has to compromise, whether they seek deep specialization or a broad, balanced education.

IB Diploma Programme — Breadth, Balance, Holistic Development

The IB Diploma Programme encourages students to explore a wide range of disciplines: languages, sciences, humanities, mathematics, arts, offering a broad, balanced curriculum.

Beyond traditional academic subjects, IB includes core components that foster critical thinking, research skills, and personal growth: the Theory of Knowledge (TOK), the Extended Essay (EE), and Creativity, Activity and Service (CAS). These elements encourage students to think analytically, engage in independent research, manage time, and participate in community or creative activities, skills valuable far beyond school.

Such a holistic approach cultivates well-rounded individuals, prepared not only academically, but also socially and intellectually, for the challenges and opportunities of a global, interconnected world. This makes IB especially suitable for students who appreciate variety, enjoy interdisciplinary thinking, and might still be exploring their future direction.

CAMBRIDGE
International Examinations
Excellence in education

Cambridge A Levels – Depth, Focus, Specialisation

In contrast, Cambridge A Levels are ideal for students who want to dive deeply into their chosen subjects. Students typically select 3 to 4 subjects and study them over two years. This structure allows for in-depth knowledge and comprehensive preparation in their selected fields, whether that is mathematics, English, humanities, or languages.

Because A Levels focus on fewer subjects, learners can concentrate their efforts, achieve mastery, and better prepare for university-level courses in those subjects. The streamlined subject load often leaves more time for co-curricular interests or part-time pursuits, a major advantage for students seeking balance.

Additionally, the assessment system in A Levels tends to be straightforward, primarily end-of-course exams, which appeals to students who perform better under exam conditions rather than continuous assessment.

Recognition and University Preparation

Both A Levels and IB enjoy wide international recognition among universities, meaning either programme can open doors to higher education around the world.

Furthermore, both foster academic rigor. A Levels' focused depth offers strong preparation when students aim for highly specialized university courses.

IB, on the other hand, builds research, writing, and critical thinking skills through coursework, essays, and interdisciplinary studies, strengths especially beneficial for university programmes that value analytical and broad-minded thinking.

Meeting Diverse Student Needs

By giving students the choice between IB and A Levels, our school acknowledges that educational success comes in many forms.

This dual offer strengthens our school community: we respect individual differences, encourage personal growth, and support every student's unique journey. Ultimately, our goal is to prepare young people not only for university admission, but for thoughtful, adaptable, and purpose-driven lives.

In Conclusion

Whether through the depth and specialization of Cambridge A Levels or the breadth and holistic development of the IB Diploma Programme, our school provides high-quality, internationally recognised pathways, ensuring that every student has the opportunity to thrive according to their strengths, interests, and aspirations.

In offering both curricula, we stand by our commitment: to support every student in finding their best-fit path and achieving excellence, academically, personally, and beyond.

Carmen Zaharia
Head of 6th Form

The Power of Connection. Building Strong Relationships at ISB



At ISB, we know that learning isn't just about grades. True growth happens when students feel seen, heard, and valued, and this starts with relationships. Strong connections with teachers, peers, and the wider school community are the foundation for thriving socially, emotionally, and academically.

A sense of belonging is at the heart of school life here. Our teachers take time to understand each student as an individual, celebrating strengths and supporting growth. This creates a culture where curiosity, confidence, and resilience develop naturally.

Equally important are the friendships and peer connections that develop every day. Through collaborative projects, group challenges, and peer mentoring, students learn to work together, support each other, and build empathy and respect. These experiences shape character and social skills that last far beyond the classroom.

Parents are an essential part of this network. ISB encourages open communication between home and school, creating a partnership that ensures students feel supported in every aspect of their lives. School events, celebrations, and community initiatives bring families into the heart of school life, reinforcing the shared commitment to students' growth.

Everything we do at ISB is designed to nurture the whole student. Academic programs are complemented by pastoral care, co-curricular opportunities, and social engagement. All are aimed at strengthening relationships and building a strong, inclusive community. Here, students feel they belong, approach challenges with confidence, and celebrate achievements together.

In a world that often measures success solely by outcomes, ISB stands out by valuing connection as the foundation of growth. By fostering strong relationships, we equip our students not only to excel academically but also to develop the empathy, resilience, and confidence they will carry with them for life.

Adina Iacob

Head of Pastoral Care



ISB Student Council: Empowering Student Voices, Shaping Our School

At the International School of Bucharest, students have always been at the heart of everything we do. Their ideas, their energy, and their perspectives guide our school's growth. One of the strongest expressions of this commitment is the ISB **Student Council**—a long-standing tradition that ensures every student has a voice and every voice matters.



A Strong Start to the Year

This year's first Student Council meeting set the tone for what promises to be a dynamic and inspiring journey ahead. **Our Head Boy, Giorgio**, and **Head Girl, Evelin**, chaired the meeting with confidence, enthusiasm, and a clear vision for the school community. They ensured that every representative felt heard, valued, and empowered to contribute.

Leadership Across Primary and Secondary

Both the **Primary School** and **Secondary School** hold elections each year to select their Student Council representatives. These elections not only promote democracy within our school but also teach invaluable lessons in responsibility, teamwork, and leadership.

The Head Boy and Head Girl, elected annually by their peers and teachers, serve as the chairs of the Student Council, guiding discussions and helping transform student ideas into meaningful action.

Beyond the Council: A Culture of Leadership

In addition to the Student Council, ISB is proud to have a **whole-school Eco Committee**, where students collaborate on sustainability initiatives and help make ISB a greener, more environmentally conscious community.

Leadership opportunities extend even further in the **Primary School**, where pupils elect their **Prefects** and **House Captains** each year. These roles help younger students develop confidence, responsibility, and a strong sense of belonging within their Houses and school community.

Our Mission: Listening, Representing, Acting

The Student Council remains deeply committed to its mission:

- Representing the student body
- Listening actively
- Turning feedback into real change

This year, the Council is focusing on:

- Strengthening community spirit
- Making student life more engaging and enjoyable
- Creating opportunities for all students to get involved

ISB at the International Student Council Meeting – North Macedonia

In November, Year 12 student Alexandra D. proudly represented ISB at the International Student Council Meeting in North Macedonia, joining student leaders from Lumina schools across the region. Together, they shared ideas, compared initiatives, and explored how student councils can make an even greater impact.

Alexandra's Reflection

"I had the incredible opportunity to represent ISB at the International Student Council Meeting in North Macedonia. It was amazing to see how student councils across Lumina schools operate—many of us run similar activities like charitable fairs, but I was especially inspired by the emphasis many schools place on mental health.

Because of the ongoing war in Ukraine, schools in Kyiv have dedicated an entire week to mental health discussions. I also loved discovering that in Moldova, schools host No Backpack Days, where students bring creative alternatives instead of bags, as well as Student Days filled with sports and fun challenges between students and teachers.

I'm truly grateful to ISB for giving me the chance to represent our student council, and I can't wait to bring some of these ideas back to our school."

— **Alexandra D. (Y12I)**, ISB Representative at HOSC Skopje 2025



Staying Connected Across Continents: ISB's Tradition of Celebrating Our Alumni

At the International School of Bucharest, our alumni are more than just former students—they are lifelong members of the ISB family. One of our proudest traditions is maintaining strong, meaningful connections with them long after they leave our hallways. Whether they are studying in Europe, the United States, or beyond, our alumni continue to inspire us with their achievements, their journeys, and their continued ties to the ISB community.





Reconnecting with Alumni in the USA

During the recent half-term break, our Alumni Coordinator, Mr. Turgut Dundar, together with Alumni Coordinators from Lumina Educational Institutions, travelled across the United States to meet a group of our exceptional alumni: **Violeta B.**, **Adrian M.**, **Maria V.**, **Michael V.**, **George V.**, **Esad O.**, **Mahir O.**, **Filip G.**, **Umit A.**, and **Fatih Y.**

These former students are now pursuing their academic dreams at prestigious universities such as **Cornell University**, **Worcester Polytechnic Institute**, and **North American University**. The visit brought opportunities to share stories, reconnect, and celebrate their accomplishments—reminders of the lasting impact of an ISB education and the strong bonds formed during their school years.

Celebrating 1st December with Alumni in Europe



The tradition continued as our Head of School, **Mr. Serdar Sakman**, Head of Secondary School, **Mr. Oytun Pekel**, and Alumni Coordinator, **Mr. Turgut Dundar**, visited Belgium and the Netherlands to celebrate Romania's National Day with members of our European alumni community. Alongside colleagues from Lumina Educational Institutions, they travelled to **Amsterdam**, **Maastricht**, and **Groningen**, meeting with **23 ISB Alumni**.

Together they celebrated 1st December, sharing memories, laughter, and reflections on life after ISB. These gatherings were heartfelt reminders of how far our alumni have come—and how strongly they still feel connected to their school roots.

A Living Tradition: Once at ISB, Always Part of ISB

These international visits highlight a deeply cherished value at ISB: the commitment to staying connected. Our alumni may venture into new countries, new careers, and new stages of life, but they remain part of our story—and we remain part of theirs.

Their successes are our pride. Their journeys are our inspiration. Their visits remind us that ISB is not just a school; it is a community built on shared experiences, lifelong friendships, and a sense of belonging that doesn't fade.

Once at ISB, always part of ISB.





CIS International University Fair 2025 at ISB

The International School of Bucharest (ISB) hosted the CIS International University Fair on **15 October 2025**. Students and families **explored pathways to higher education** and connected with representatives from top universities around the world.

Attendees **met admissions officers, learned about programs and degrees, understood application processes**, and **discovered scholarships and study abroad opportunities**. Eligible students included those from CIS, IB, and Cambridge Assessment schools.

Over **30 universities from Europe, North America, and beyond** participated, including DePaul University, Purdue University, Syracuse University, IE University, and The University of Manchester.

The fair **helped students clarify academic goals, explore global study options, and gain insights into university life**, supporting their next steps toward higher education.

Madalina Cioc

Marketing and Communications Manager



CIS Team Visits Our School as We Prepare for Reaccreditation

"At the end of November, our school proudly welcomed a visiting team from the Council of International Schools (CIS) for a three-day preparatory engagement visit — an important step in our ongoing accreditation journey."



CIS is a global organization that promotes high-quality international education through a rigorous accreditation process. International schools are required to renew their accreditation every five years, undergoing an in-depth evaluation that examines every aspect of school life, from learning and teaching to leadership, wellbeing, and community culture.

During the visit, our community opened its doors to authentic learning in action. Students led campus tours, teachers and staff participated in professional conversations, and our visitors joined learning walks, wellbeing sessions, and collaborative workshops. Each interaction offered a meaningful glimpse into the daily life and values of our school.

We extend our warmest thanks to our CIS evaluators, Gabriel Abad Fernandez and Sibylle Harth, for their time, insights, and partnership. Their feedback helps us continue growing as a vibrant, forward-looking learning community.

Together, we move confidently toward our next full accreditation — and a future shaped by continuous improvement.

Madalina Cioc

Marketing and Communications Manager





The Value of Experiential Learning for IB Students

On 12 November, our Year 12 and 13 students attended a theatre adaptation of George Orwell's 1984 at the Sala Dalles Theatre. While the performance itself was impactful, the experience served a larger purpose within our English Department and within the IB philosophy more broadly. The IB encourages students to think critically, engage with diverse perspectives and develop a genuine curiosity about the world. Opportunities beyond the classroom play an essential role in helping students achieve this.

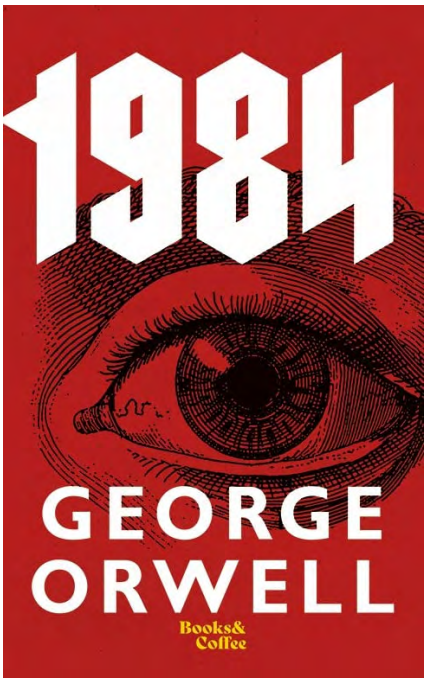
In English, we ask students to interpret, analyse and evaluate complex texts. Field trips like this one allow those skills to develop in a far more immediate and memorable way. Watching 1984 performed live helped students see how language, performance and staging shape meaning. It pushed them to compare written interpretation with artistic adaptation. It encouraged them to ask questions, challenge assumptions and reflect on the relevance of the novel's themes in a contemporary context. These are exactly the habits of mind we aim to nurture in IB learners.

More importantly, experiences outside the school environment help students connect their academic work to the wider world. They remind students that literature is not only something to be studied but something to be experienced, debated and felt. The discussions that unfolded afterwards highlighted how much deeper their understanding becomes when learning is active, social and rooted in real encounters.

Our students represented the school with maturity and enthusiasm, showing once again why these opportunities matter and why we remain committed to offering them as an integral part of our English curriculum.

Rachel Ferreira
Head of English







Celebrating Excellence in Mathematics at ISB Secondary School

The Mathematics Department is delighted to celebrate a term filled with exceptional achievements by our students in several prestigious international mathematics competitions. Their dedication, curiosity, and enthusiasm for problem-solving have resulted in an impressive collection of medals and awards, reflecting the strength of mathematical learning within our school community. **These achievements reflect strong dedication and advanced mathematical thinking.**

Math Without Borders – Autumn Round

We are proud to congratulate our bronze medallists, whose strong reasoning skills and steady commitment shone through in this global competition:

- Tudor N. (Year 12)
- Giorgio S. (Year 13)
- Yiye Z. (Year 10)

Senior UKMT Mathematical Challenge

In the highly competitive UKMT Senior Challenge, our students once again demonstrated remarkable ability:

Gold Awards

- Hyun S. (Year 10) – Two years below the recommended entry age
- Giorgio S. (Year 13)

Silver Awards

- Gabriel L. (Year 13)
- Ianis D. (Year 12)
- Andrei E. (Year 12)
- Safa K. (Year 12)
- Tudor N. (Year 12)

Bronze Awards

- Amedeo S. (Year 10) – Two years below the recommended age
- Kehao C. (Year 12)

AMC 12 – American Mathematics Competition

Our senior students also excelled in the AMC 12, a challenging international contest that encourages advanced mathematical thinking:

- Gold: Tudor N. (Year 12)
- Silver: Sung Hoon C. (Year 12)
- Bronze: Andrei E. (Year 12)

A heartfelt congratulations to all our award winners! Their achievements inspire our entire community and highlight the vibrant culture of mathematical curiosity at ISB. We look forward to seeing what they accomplish next.

Marilena Bigu

Head of Mathematics Department



Representing Romania on the World Stage: A Journey Through International Economics Competitions

This summer, I had the privilege to represent Romania in several prestigious international economics competitions, achieving some of my proudest academic milestones.

In July, I competed in the **Australasian Economics Olympiad (AAEO)** in Sydney, Australia, where I was awarded the **Gold Medal**, winning **Romania's first Gold** and ranking among the best participants globally.

Shortly after, I took part in the **World Economics Cup (WEC)**, where I placed in the Top 10 in Europe, showcasing strategic thinking in high-level problem solving.

At the end of July, I also participated in the **International Economics Olympiad (IEO)**, further deepening my experience on the global stage and connecting with talented students from across the globe.

Finally, to complete this summer, I participated in the **International Finance Olympiad (IFO)** achieving a certificate of **higher distinction** for placing in the **Top 6 regionally**. Unlike my other competitions, it allowed me to explore a more niche passion – finance. This helped me reflect on how financial literacy shapes decision-making, both individually and on a global scale.

Each competition tested different skills, from the AAEO's analysis of industrial policies, to WEC's emphasis on teamwork and real-world applications, to IEO's and IFO's combination of international cooperation and applied economics challenges.

Together, these opportunities pushed me to think critically, work under pressure and adapt economic models to complex, real-world issues.

I am deeply grateful to the International School of Bucharest for the constant support and encouragement I have received from my teachers and peers. Beyond medals and rankings, these experiences have given me confidence, broadened my global perspective and strengthened my passion for economics.

I hope my journey can inspire other ISB students to pursue their interests, test their skills on an international stage and discover the value of learning beyond the classroom.

Giorgio Sforza,
Year 13 IBDP Student



Shaping Global Citizens: The Essential Role of Humanities at ISB

In today's fast-changing and unpredictable world, young people need more than academic knowledge to thrive - they need to think critically, understand diverse perspectives, communicate effectively, and make sense of global complexity. At ISB, these skills lie at the heart of our mission. As an international school, we strive to develop responsible, respectful, and empathetic global citizens who contribute meaningfully to society. One of the most powerful ways we achieve this is through the Humanities.

Our Humanities programme - spanning Business Studies, Economics, Geography, Global Perspectives, History, Psychology, and Sociology - sits at the intersection of knowledge and human experience. These subjects help students interpret cultures, systems, and societies. At Key Stage 3, our curriculum builds a broad foundation; by IGCSE and IBDP level, students develop the analytical and interpersonal skills demanded by an increasingly interconnected world.

Why Humanities Matter Today

Globally, employers continue to emphasise the importance of critical thinking, teamwork, cultural understanding, and problem-solving. Research regularly shows that Humanities subjects strengthen communication, adaptability, and empathy - qualities essential in fields ranging from diplomacy and law to entrepreneurship, media, medicine, and design.

But the value of the Humanities goes beyond employability. These subjects teach students how to analyse information, evaluate sources, recognise bias, and question assumptions - skills vital in an era shaped by misinformation and



Mr. Quinn's Year 9s are relating WWI to today's conflicts.

rapid technological change. They allow students to understand the forces shaping societies, the emotions influencing behaviour, and the systems that structure human life. As ISB teacher Amy G. explains, "In Humanities classes, … students learn how to think for themselves."

The Power of Each Humanities Subject



Eric N. and Matias S. study in IGCSE history class.

History gives students perspective on the present by examining the past. As Emilia O. beautifully expressed, studying History is like "living multiple lives," enabling learners to evaluate evidence, appreciate diverse viewpoints, and understand patterns of change.



Marcian P. explains Geography concepts to classmates.



Mr. Mihai challenges his Year 7 Geography students.

Geography equips students to understand our planet's systems - a crucial skill in a world defined by climate change, resource pressures, and global migration. It fosters environmental awareness and spatial thinking.

Global Perspectives develops students' capacity to investigate worldwide issues - poverty, sustainability, technology, conflict - while engaging with viewpoints from different cultures. It builds inquiry, collaboration, and reflective thinking.

Business Studies and Economics provide practical financial literacy and economic reasoning. As Ms. Carolina C. put it, "Teaching business … shapes… where and how students spend their money!" Students strongly agree: Sebi G. describes Business as "the skillset needed to be innovative," while Mircea H. calls it "the pillar of creativity… that unlocks critical thinking and entrepreneurial minds."

Sociology helps students understand how societies function, why inequalities persist, and how social groups interact. It nurtures cultural awareness



Mr. Olsi prepares students for an assessment.

and responsible citizenship. As Mr. Santos sees it, "Humanities won't fix the world, but at least they make students slightly better at understanding why it's so weird."

Psychology offers insight into human behaviour and emotion. Student Teodor B. explained that Psychology has deepened his understanding of "the complexities behind human emotions and behaviours." Others echo this: Furkan B. says his lessons "open windows into understanding people and society," while Amalia R. notes that Psychology has taught her "to see through others' eyes."

Humanities and Empathy

Across all subjects, the Humanities cultivate empathy - one of ISB's core values. As Mr. Olsi Z. summarises, "Humanities start with empathy and perspective, shaping the way students understand choices, cultures and human stories." This ethos aligns directly with our school's commitment to respect, compassion, and global citizenship.

A Foundation for the Future

Our teachers witness daily how Humanities shape thoughtful, articulate young adults. As Ms. Matilda M. states, "Humanities enable students to better understand human motivations… fostering empathy and critical thinking." These strengths are reflected in our academic results; in the most recent IBDP cohort, six ISB students earned 40+ points.

At ISB, Humanities subjects do far more than fill a timetable. They shape character, build resilience, and prepare students to navigate an increasingly complex world. They remind learners that every statistic has a story, every decision has consequences, and every person brings a unique perspective worth understanding.

As an international school committed to shaping responsible global citizens, we believe the Humanities are not simply important—they are essential. They provide the skills, values, and perspectives young people need to contribute meaningfully to society. In the end, the Humanities teach what it means to be human in a world that needs humanity more than ever.

Thomas Quinn,
Head of Humanities



The 2025 - 2026 Humanities Department
L to R: Mr. Mihai, Mr. Santos, Ms. Amy G, Mr. Bogdan, Ms. Carolina C, Mr. Quinn, Ms. Matilda M, Dr. Carmen Z, Mr. Wall, Dr. Blessy S, Mr. Olsi and Mrs. Madalina P.

Leadership Skills Foundation at ISB

ISB has recently become a centre for the Leadership Skills Foundation, whose mission is: *To build the confidence to believe, the qualities to lead, and the skills to succeed in young people.*

Leadership Skills are for life and include:

- Communication
- Self-belief
- Teamwork
- Self-management
- Problem solving

These closely correspond to the IBO's Approaches to Learning, being holistic and essential to so many activities as well as to how we learn. Many of the courses and awards offered by LSF will support other activities, and as a school, we aim to roll out a range of these in the future, for different groups and ages.



On Saturday 22nd November, 8 of our students successfully completed ISB's inaugural Go Lead Award for age 16+. They engaged in discussion, reflections and activities to develop their leadership skills, such as communication, teamwork, organisation and self-management, improvisation, problem-solving, inclusion and adaption. Their tutors for this course, myself and Ms Teo, are proud that every single one of them rose to the challenge, receiving their accredited certificate from the Leadership Skills Foundation. Congratulations go to: Iulia M., Cai (Yang) S., Amalia R., Afra B., Maria D., Melisa O., Azra Betal C., Iulia C.



Jane Barnett
Centre Manager
Leadership Skills Foundation



ISB Debaters Make Their Mark: A Season of Talent, Teamwork and Triumph

This year has been an exceptional one for the ISB Debate teams. It has been a season shaped not only by impressive results, but by the growth, confidence and genuine spirit our students have shown at every event. From the first speeches in Term 1 to a full calendar still ahead, our debaters continue to demonstrate what thoughtful preparation, sharp thinking and real teamwork look like.

A Strong Start to the Season

Our journey began on 10 October at the U15 European Debating Championships, where two ISB teams entered a demanding field of ten teams from five international schools. The rounds required quick thinking, calm under pressure and clear structured argumentation. One of the most memorable moments came in Round 3, when students were mixed into new teams with competitors from other schools. It was a true test of flexibility and confidence. Our students rose to the moment, collaborating naturally and showing the kind of maturity that impresses both coaches and judges.

The final round, led by Sara K with real composure and professionalism, was a wonderful moment for ISB. Our students earned second and fourth place, and Amedeo S received the Best Debater Trophy. We are proud of our entire U15 team: Camelia M, Diana P, Amedeo S, Sofia E, Sara K, Sophia A, Lisa S, Marcian P, Berrin D and Esin S.

Just a month later, on 10 November, our high school team took part in the Sir Winston Churchill Debate

Competition at the Ramada Plaza Bucharest. Competing against twelve strong teams, our students delivered thoughtful and well reasoned arguments through one prepared and three impromptu rounds. Amedeo S, Anastasia C, Kleopatra L, Mara T, Tian H and Tudor N showed confidence, strong analytical skills and the ability to think clearly even under time pressure. It also provided opportunities to build new friendships, exchange ideas with peers from diverse backgrounds, and further refine the art of respectful, constructive debate.

Looking Ahead

Our students continue to explore British Parliamentary debating and will represent ISB at two regional Oxford Debate Union events this year. One will take place at Avenor here in Bucharest and the other at the Dutch Oxford Championship in Rotterdam.

We are also very proud to share that ISB will host the World Scholars Cup this year. This event brings together students for collaborative writing, the Scholars Challenge, the Scholars Bowl and a debate section that will follow a new format for secondary students.

This updated structure reflects the international move away from internet based devices during debates and encourages greater student agency and genuine independent thinking. Our WSC teams will be prepared by Ms Busra Sen.

A Community Effort

None of this would be possible without the people who build and support our debate culture every week. It truly does take a village. I would like to recognise our dedicated coaches Blessy Savu, Mihaela Christescu and Busra Sen, and our supervisors Ben Wall and Jens Vandevyvere. Their encouragement and consistency allow our students to grow as speakers, thinkers and teammates.

As we look back on this season, we celebrate every student who stepped up to compete with curiosity, passion and integrity. The future of debating at ISB is looking very bright. Well done to all of you. You have made us proud, and we cannot wait to see what you achieve next.

Mihaela Christescu
English Teacher





Growing Together: Supporting Our Children Through Change

From September to January, our PSHE sessions have covered a series of topics designed to support students' emotional and social development. We explored Growing and Changing (sleep, resilience, and learning from mistakes), Self-Esteem and Body Image, Bullying and Discrimination, Emotion Regulation, and Peer-to-Peer Relationships.

Each of these themes has contributed to raising awareness and improving knowledge among our students, particularly in Key Stage 3, where understanding these concepts early can make a lasting difference. The younger the students begin to learn about emotions, relationships and self-awareness, the more naturally these lessons become part of how they think, behave and build their values.

Throughout these months, I have seen remarkable progress. During the workshops and presentations, I've noticed how students are now more able to recognise emotions in themselves and in others. They approach challenges with more confidence and find constructive solutions to social situations that once seemed difficult. Their ability to empathise and reflect has grown significantly and they often share insights that show genuine understanding and maturity.

It's been especially rewarding to observe how open and engaged they are during discussions. Whether we talk about body image, kindness or emotional control, students are curious, thoughtful and eager to connect what they learn to real life. This kind of psychoeducation is essential at their age as it gives them the language, awareness and confidence to manage their emotions, form positive relationships and navigate growing up with a sense of balance and respect for themselves and others.

As a counsellor, witnessing this development is one of the most fulfilling parts of my work. Seeing students become more reflective, kind and emotionally aware reminds us all how important it is to start these conversations early. When we give children the tools to understand themselves and others, we help them lay the foundations for strong values, empathy and resilience - qualities that will serve them well throughout life.

Ana Nas

Secondary School Counsellor



Understanding Grades in a Modern Educational World

Grades are among the most visible features of modern schooling, yet they are also among the most frequently misunderstood. A grade is a descriptor of performance against clearly defined assessment criteria; it represents the degree to which a student has demonstrated the required knowledge, skills, and understanding at a particular moment in time. It is not a measure of worth, intelligence, potential, or character, and it certainly cannot capture kindness, creativity, resilience, or the many qualities that contribute to a well-rounded and flourishing young person. Recent educational research has repeatedly shown that academic attainment is only one factor among many that shape later success, with personal attributes such as persistence and adaptability playing equally significant roles (Credé et al., 2017).

Universities continue to use grades because they offer a standardised and externally moderated form of comparison between students from different schools and national systems. In highly competitive admissions environments, institutions require a reliable indicator of academic readiness for higher-level study. Even so, universities consistently emphasise that they are seeking students who can think critically, conduct independent inquiry, manage their time, and contribute thoughtfully to academic communities. These qualities extend far beyond numerical attainment.

It is important to recognise that not every student can achieve an A* at IGCSE or a 7 in the IB Diploma Programme. These top grades represent exceptional conceptual understanding, strong analytical ability, and the capacity to apply ideas in new and often unfamiliar contexts. Grade boundaries are determined using a combination of statistical evidence and expert judgement, ensuring that results remain fair from year to year. If an examination paper proves particularly challenging, boundaries may move down; if it is comparatively straightforward, they may move up. Without such adjustments, grades would lose coherence and become inconsistent over time. This system also ensures that the very highest grades remain a marker of genuinely outstanding performance. If every student scored 100 percent, the assessment would fail to differentiate between levels of understanding and would no longer allow the highest achieving candidates to demonstrate the depth and sophistication of their thinking.

Assessment in the twenty-first century has also evolved significantly from the systems of the mid-twentieth century. We no longer live in an era in which academic success is defined primarily by the ability to memorise and repeat factual information. Google and artificial intelligence are able to retrieve facts instantly, therefore examination boards now place far greater emphasis on the application of logic, problem solving, critical thinking, and the capacity to transfer knowledge into new scenarios. Curricula across the world increasingly value inquiry-based learning, where students construct understanding for themselves and engage actively with complex questions. Recent educational research supports this approach, noting that deep learning emerges when students reason, question, and apply ideas rather than merely recall them (Arifin et al., 2025).

Alongside these academic structures sits an equally important developmental dimension. A grade that falls below expectation is not a failure; it is a moment of feedback that highlights where understanding is secure and where it can be strengthened. Resilience, and the ability to persist in the face of difficulty, is one of the strongest predictors of long-term success according to recent meta-analytic evidence (Mulati, 2022). Equally significant is the quality often described as being coachable; the willingness to receive guidance, reflect honestly, and make purposeful improvements. This mindset aligns closely with contemporary research on growth mindset, which demonstrates that students who view ability as something that can be developed over time show greater motivation and improved outcomes (Yeager et al., 2019).

It is equally important to remember that every child has different strengths, interests, and ways of learning. Academic grades measure only a narrow segment of human capability. They cannot assess empathy, imagination, leadership, humour, teamwork, or the countless qualities that allow individuals to contribute meaningfully to their communities. A thriving society depends on a rich diversity of talents, and not all of them are captured within the boundaries of an examination script. As educators, our responsibility is not to produce identical academic profiles but to help each young person grow into their unique potential.

In the end, grades matter, but not in the simplistic way they are sometimes perceived. They provide useful information about academic performance; they support university admissions; and they maintain rigorous standards in learning. Yet they do not define a student's identity, nor do they predict the full arc of a person's life. In an educational landscape that values inquiry, adaptability, and resilience, they form one part of a much larger journey. Our task is to help students understand that journey, embrace their strengths, learn from challenges, and recognise the enduring value of effort, curiosity, and personal growth.

Gareth Avenell
Science Teacher

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Creating, Connecting and Communicating through the Arts





The IBDP has finally introduced and launched its long awaited, updated Visual Arts course. With a keen eye on the future, teaching and learning is driven by the syllabus rather than the assessment criteria, and first year students spend much of their time exploring artmaking within a studio context, through inquiry. Our Year 12 artists are currently getting to grips with this approach, which is rather different from what they did in IGCSE. They are becoming familiar with setting themselves inquiry questions and generative statements to drive the creating, connecting and communicating of their ideas, to eventually produce more personally explored, authentic outcomes.

This is something that all artists do – both visual and performing. We need the time and environment to be able to explore techniques and media; to connect our learning, past, present and future, to other practitioners' work too; and finally, to be able to communicate our honed and refined outcomes to an audience or viewers. Some of our musicians showcased this process brilliantly at the annual Winter Concert recently. Also, as part of Arts Week, the Art teachers modelled a little connecting and communicating too, utilising the creating of a range of our students in a Curation of works displayed in the Gallery. We brought seemingly unconnected artworks to the table, seeking connections between themes and styles to present the whole. This is not so dissimilar to what our fledgling 'new coursers' will be doing next year in Year 13, as they see their art through to resolution. It promises to be an exciting journey.

Jane Barnett

Head of Visual & Performing Arts

Renaissance Portraits — Year 9 Exhibition

Step into the past with a modern twist! Our talented Year 9 students proudly present their Renaissance Portraits Exhibition, inspired by one of the most influential artistic periods in history.

After studying Renaissance masters — Leonardo da Vinci, Raphael, Johannes Vermeer, Jan van Eyck — students explored proportion, light, symbolism, and the cultural significance of the era.

The result? Each student created a unique portrait by blending their own image with the body of a Renaissance figure — a creative fusion of past and present that highlights both artistic skill and imaginative thinking.

From detailed drawing and painting techniques to thoughtful symbolism, these works show how art can bridge centuries of human expression.

Visit the exhibition on the 3rd floor, Secondary, and experience how our young artists bring the Renaissance to life — with a fresh, modern perspective!

Teodora Varzaru
Visual Arts IGCSE & IB Teacher





From One Board to Many: The Rise of Chess Culture at ISB

Years ago, the chess journey at ISB began with a single old chessboard, quietly introduced in a classroom by a teacher. It was a simple set, but it sparked curiosity in his students. A few students tentatively gathered, learning moves and strategies from one another so that they could give it a go to play and win eventually against their teacher. What began as casual games soon drew more interest. Word spread about this fascinating game of kings, queens, and strategy.

As time passed, the chess culture at ISB flourished, and naturally, the Chess clubs formed, providing regular spaces for students to play, learn, and develop their skills each Friday after school. The school acquired more chess sets, enabling friendly tournaments and inviting beginners and experienced players alike.

The chess community at ISB today is a lively hub where strategy, critical thinking, and patience are celebrated. Students from different grades come together, bonding over their love of the game. Competitions are organised not just within the school but also with other schools in the area, fostering teamwork and sportsmanship.

Beyond competition, chess at ISB has become a tool for personal growth. Players learn to plan, think creatively, and stay calm under pressure—skills that benefit them far beyond the chessboard. The school's support for chess reflects a broader commitment to nurturing diverse talents and encouraging lifelong passions.

From a single chessboard to a thriving culture, the journey of chess at ISB shows how a simple idea can grow into a community of engaged, thoughtful students. This game of intellect continues to inspire many, proving that every great passion starts with a small step—and a single move.

Mihai Gheorghe
Geography Teacher









Boys' Football Team – Eagles Rising to Victory

It has been an outstanding season for the ISB Eagles Boys' Football teams, with multiple groups showcasing talent, dedication, and true sportsmanship. The **U15 Eagles** kicked off the triumphs with a **championship win at the U15 BSB Autumn Cup**, demonstrating excellent teamwork and determination.

Adding to the success, the **U14 Boys** soared to an incredible **1st place finish at the American International School Football Tournament**, proving their growing strength and unity on the pitch. Their skill, discipline, and relentless effort made the entire ISB community proud.

These young Eagles represent the future of ISB football—full of promise, passion, and potential. Congratulations to all players and coaches for a fantastic season of victories!

ISB Open Age Girls Volleyball Team's Inspiring Journey to the BISAAC Final Four



The ISB Open Age Girls Volleyball team delivered an outstanding performance at the recent BISAAC Volleyball League Final Four, competing against AISB, CSB, and Avenor—three schools with strong sporting traditions. Through determination, skill, and exceptional teamwork, our athletes secured an impressive 3rd place finish, a result that reflects months of hard work and commitment.

The journey began back in October, with a series of challenging group games against DSBU, BSB, CSB, AISB, and Avenor. From the very first match, the team showed resilience and enthusiasm, approaching every game with the same determination regardless of the score. Whether leading or facing setbacks during sets, the girls remained focused on a single objective: earning a place in the Final Four. Their positive mindset, unity, and refusal to give up were evident throughout the season.

Weekly training sessions played a key role in their development, with the team consistently working on technical skills, tactical understanding, and on-court communication. This dedication was clearly visible during the Final Four tournament, where the girls played with confidence, strong defense, powerful rallies, and excellent sportsmanship.

Congratulations to the entire team—Aysu B., Ayur D., Anastasia C., Elif G., Zehra C., Timeea A., Daria V., Zehra U., Azra C., Esra E., Shyrin S., and Irina C. Your passion, effort, and team spirit have made the ISB community incredibly proud. We look forward to seeing you continue this fantastic journey and achieve even greater success in the future.

Ingrid Stanciu
Head of Enrichment Primary School

Open Age Girls Volleyball Team Strength, Spirit & Skill



The ISB Open Age Girls Volleyball Team delivered an exceptional performance this season, culminating in an impressive **3rd place finish at the BISAAC Final Four.** Competing against strong teams from international schools across Bucharest, the girls played with determination, discipline, and true competitive spirit.

Throughout the season, they demonstrated remarkable growth—refining their skills, strengthening their teamwork, and showing resilience in every match. Their hard work was clear on the court, and their achievements reflect the incredible commitment they've put in week after week.

A huge congratulations to Aysu, Ayur, Anastasia, Elif, Zehra C., Timeea, Daria, Zehra U., Azra, Esra, Shyrin & Irina. Your passion and perseverance shine brightly—ISB is proud of you!



Celebrating International Day at ISB: A Festival of Cultures, Colors, and Connection

International Day at ISB once again brought our diverse community together in a vibrant celebration of culture, unity, and learning. With more than 40 nationalities represented in our school, the event truly reflected the richness of our global identity. Students proudly participated in the colourful costume parade, showcasing traditional outfits that highlighted the beauty of their heritage. The stage came alive with energetic singing and dancing, each performance radiating pride, enthusiasm, and joy, creating an atmosphere that captivated the entire audience.

One of the highlights of the celebration was the much-anticipated Food Fair. PTA members joined forces to present an extraordinary selection of traditional dishes from around the world, offering everyone a delicious journey through different cultures. The aromas, flavours, and warm stories behind each dish added a special touch to the day's festivities.

Throughout the week, students worked enthusiastically to decorate their classroom doors with handmade posters, drawings, and creative projects. Each door told a story, reflecting what students had learned about countries across the globe. Primary students took part in a special "travel around the world" experience—visiting classrooms, collecting stamps in their passports, and learning fascinating facts about all seven continents. Whether discovering the world's largest continent, exploring the biodiversity of others, or imagining life in icy polar regions, every visit strengthened their understanding of global geography and cultural diversity.

Some of the door designs from the contest:



















Celebrating different cultures in this way enriches students' cognitive, social, and emotional development. It enhances skills such as critical thinking and problem-solving, fosters empathy and tolerance, and prepares students for life in an interconnected world. At ISB, International Day is more than an event—it is an opportunity for students to become open-minded, culturally aware global citizens.

Students testimonials:

"On International Day, everyone had to dress up in clothes from any country they liked. I chose to wear the traditional costume of Palestine. The excitement was in the air as we all gathered in the big gym for the parade, and even those without costumes had to join in. After the parade ended, we headed to the hallway, which was filled with the delicious smells of food from around the world. Parents and teachers had brought dishes from their countries, and everything looked amazing. I couldn't wait to try it all, and it tasted even better than it looked!" **Lara S - 5B**

"On International Day, we all went to the big gym for a parade. Everyone had to dress in their international clothes, and I felt really excited to see all the different costumes. Our parents came to watch us, which made the day feel even more special. During the parade, I felt proud wearing my outfit and seeing everyone cheering. After the parade, we had a buffet with food from different countries. The smells and colors of the dishes were amazing, and I felt happy trying all the different flavors. It was a wonderful day, and we all enjoyed the parade, the food, and spending time together." **Ariadna R - 5B**

"We really enjoyed the food because it tasted delicious. The song at the end was wonderful, and it was exciting to represent our countries. We liked every country's costume because they were all so creative and beautiful. The whole event was very organized, which made it even more enjoyable. We loved the show because there was so much singing and dancing, and we also appreciated how every country was treated as equally important. Overall, it was a fun and memorable day." **Lucas & Rares - 5B**

"I love watching the dances from different cultures and seeing all the amazing costumes. It's one of my favourite days of the year, and I always look forward to it. In class, I really enjoy learning about different countries and finding out what makes each one special." **Catinca 5C**

"I enjoy taking part in the Parade of Nationalities. I feel really proud because I am Romanian and English, so I get to walk twice, which makes it extra special for me. I love seeing where all the students at ISB come from and watching them wave their flags. I also really enjoy watching the amazing dances and listening to the music from different countries. One of my favourite parts is visiting the food fair and trying all the delicious food from around the world." **Sophie 5C**

Ingrid Stanciu

Head of Enrichment Primary School



Photos from the costume parade:



















Inspiring the Future Engineers Through the Real-life Problem

Join us on this exciting journey. Start with a visit to our lab on the second floor near the theater and experience everything for yourself.

With the start of the new season, the team quickly shifts from the off-season spirit into full work mode. With upcoming events and the Regional competition ahead, every member plays a crucial role in our path to success. All the inspiration, hard work, and dedication will be put to the test.

This season, we aim to be more hands-on than ever before. We want all our members to play an active and meaningful role in our success, engaging in even more activities than last year. The journey is challenging, but deeply rewarding.

This season has been especially demanding, featuring a brand-new game with complex mechanics involving shooting. Building on our team's historic high performance record in Romania, we continue to tackle every challenge head-on, working together to solve problems as they arise.

What is FIRST Tech Challenge?

FIRST Tech Challenge, or FTC, is the largest STEM competition in Romania. With over 200 teams nationwide and more than 8,000 teams worldwide, FTC provides students with exposure to experts from across the globe. Each year introduces a new playing field and game challenge, encouraging members to actively engage with real-life engineering and mechanical problems while developing their own innovative solutions.

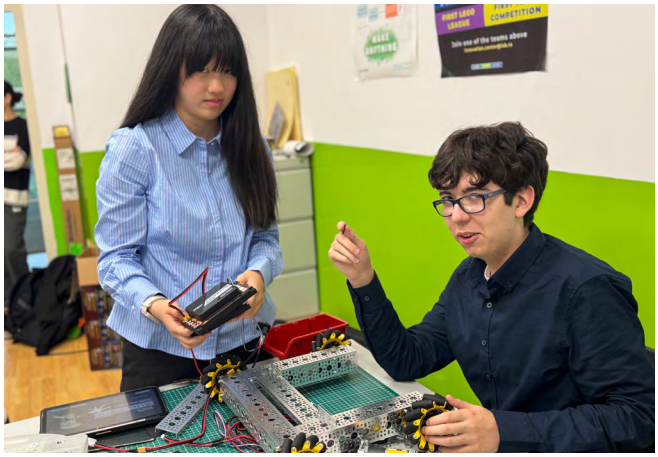
Within the team, there are no limitations and no single correct answer. Every idea and practical example has the potential to become reality. Our team is not only about mechanics and programming.

It also includes marketing and sponsorship, where members develop leadership, communication, and organizational skills. Through involvement in large-scale STEM projects, leadership is learned through real-world experience rather than theory alone.

What is an FTC Meet League?

FTC Meet Leagues are a core part of the FIRST Tech Challenge competition structure. Teams design, build, and program robots to compete on a specially designed game field, earning points through strategy, efficiency, and teamwork. Each team participates in at least three Meet League events during the season, accumulating points to qualify for the Regional Championships. These Regionals serve as the gateway to national and international stages.

This year, the Regional Championships were held in Bucharest from January 31st to February 1st, where the top teams from Southern Romania competed for advancement.



Off-season project – South Performance League

During the off-season, Andromeda Robotics was honored to collaborate with Team Clockworks in organizing the South Performance League.

This off-season demonstration event brought teams from across Romania together to compete, exchange ideas, and build connections.

With a prize pool of 1,500 lei, provided by our sponsors Kimbo Cafe, Aqua Sara, Asociația de Părinți Șincai, and the International School of Bucharest, the event offered valuable insight into improving our organizational and management skills. These lessons directly support our preparations for this season's League Meet, Relic Run.

Connecting with teams around the world

Our team extends its influence beyond Romania by actively connecting and collaborating with teams worldwide. This year, we engaged with championship-winning teams, learning from their success stories and gaining valuable insights to help us grow stronger.

We also hosted leadership webinars, inviting experts to share their experiences with team leaders globally, helping improve team efficiency, communication, and leadership skills.

Looking ahead

Our team is more than just its members. It is supported by parents, mentors, and sponsors who help turn our robotics ambitions into reality. This year marks a major milestone: Andromeda Robotics is now officially registered as a non-governmental organization.

This allows us to receive direct funding from companies and parents, making your support more important than ever. Financial backing enables us to welcome more students, advance further in competition, and expand our impact within the STEM community. In return, we offer opportunities to promote your company, invite you to international robotics events, and connect you with the wider STEM network.

If you are interested in supporting us, please contact us at andromeda@isb.ro.

Duke of Edinburgh's International Award (DofE): A Strong Start to the Year

The first term has been an exciting and productive one for the Duke of Edinburgh's International Award (DofE) programme at our school. Students across all award levels have shown dedication, resilience, and commitment as they worked towards completing their chosen sections and developing valuable life skills beyond the classroom.



We are proud to share that many students have successfully completed their award level this term and are now eagerly looking forward to receiving their certificates. Their achievements will be celebrated at the upcoming **DofE Awards Ceremony**, scheduled to take place in spring—so stay tuned for the official date.

This year also brings important updates to the programme. The **DofE policy has been revised** and is now available on the school website. We encourage all students and parents involved in DofE to review the updated policy to stay informed about programme expectations and procedures.

We are delighted to welcome **Mrs. Matilda Mateshvili** and **Mr. Fehmi** to the DofE team. Their involvement strengthens the programme and ensures continued support and guidance for our students throughout their DofE journey.

Looking ahead, exciting adventures are already being planned. More new DofE adventurous journeys are scheduled for spring, offering students fresh opportunities to develop teamwork, leadership, and outdoor skills. In addition, our **traditional DofE expedition to Sovata** will take place in June, during the final week of school, continuing a much-loved school tradition.

We look forward to another term of growth, challenge, and achievement in the DofE programme and congratulate all students for their hard work and perseverance so far.

Monica Tele

DofE Coordinator



Celebrating Romania's National Day at Our School

Our entire school community came together to celebrate Romania's National Day, marking the occasion with pride, joy, and a deep appreciation for Romanian culture and traditions. From our youngest learners to our secondary students, the celebrations reflected the spirit of unity that defines our school.

In the Early Years, the EYFS corridors and classrooms came alive with colour, music, and laughter. Dressed in beautiful traditional Romanian costumes, our youngest students delighted everyone with lively dances and cheerful songs. Their enthusiasm and smiling faces captured the true festive spirit of the day, creating a warm and joyful atmosphere throughout the Early Years setting.

In Secondary, students gathered for a special celebration assembly that offered time for reflection and learning. Through music, presentations, and thoughtful discussions, students explored Romania's history, traditions, and national values. The assembly was marked by maturity, curiosity, and respect, as learners demonstrated a genuine appreciation for the significance of Romania's National Day.

Together, these celebrations highlighted not only Romania's rich cultural heritage but also the strong sense of community within our school. It was a meaningful and memorable day that reminded us of the importance of honouring traditions, embracing diversity, and celebrating national identity.

Madalina Cioc

Marketing and Communications Manager







Primary School Carol Service and Winter Fair: A Celebration of Festive Magic







Our school community was treated to a truly magical start to the Winter Fair as the Primary School Carol Service filled the air with festive cheer. Opening the event in the most heart-warming way, our Primary students sang beautifully, enchanting parents, staff, and visitors alike. Their voices echoed through the school, drawing members of the ISB team to the staircase, where everyone paused to listen, reflect, and join in song. For those special moments, the entire ISB community came together to share the joy and spirit of Christmas.

Following this wonderful opening, the ISB Winter Fair 2025 continued the celebrations with a day full of excitement and togetherness. The Gym buzzed with energy as students, parents, and staff enjoyed a wide range of creative activities, fun games, and delicious food stands. A highlight of the day was a very special visit from Santa Claus, who added extra sparkle and delight to the festive atmosphere.

We extend a heartfelt thank you to all the parents who generously supported the event with their time, creativity, and contributions. Special appreciation also goes to our amazing students, whose enthusiasm, kindness, and willingness to volunteer helped make the day such a success. Thanks to the combined efforts of our community, the Winter Fair truly captured the warmth, joy, and magic of the season, creating memories that will be cherished by all.




POLITE
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A Magical Evening on Stage

Our school was filled with music, laughter, and festive spirit as students brought the musical No One Wraps Like An Elf to life in a truly magical performance. From the moment the curtain rose, it was clear that this production was the result of talent, teamwork, and a great deal of hard work.

The students shone brightly on stage, captivating the audience with their enthusiasm, confidence, and joy. Every song, movement, and smile reflected their dedication and love for performing. It was inspiring to see how each student played an important role in making the musical such a success, proving that when everyone works together, something truly special can be created.

We would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to our parents, whose presence and support meant so much to our young performers. Your encouragement, applause, and belief in your children helped give them the confidence to shine under the stage lights.

The strong connection between home and school was clearly felt throughout the evening.

Special appreciation goes to our Music Teacher, Mr. Victor Filip, whose dedication, creativity, and tireless efforts made this holiday magic possible. His passion for music and commitment to inspiring students were evident in every part of the performance. Under his guidance, students not only learned songs and choreography, but also gained confidence and a love for the arts.

No One Wraps Like An Elf was more than just a musical—it was a celebration of talent, support, and school spirit that will be remembered for a long time.

Madalina Cioc

Marketing and Communications Manager



A Magical Christmas Performance: A Snowman at Sunset

Early Years Foundation Stage hosted its long-awaited Christmas performance, A Snowman at Sunset, at the ISB Theater, just before the holidays. The event was a joyful celebration of the festive season, where our youngest learners proudly showcased their talents and delighted parents and teachers alike.

The performance featured a variety of charming songs and presentations, each prepared with great enthusiasm. The FS2 girls captivated the audience with Look At The Snowflakes, while FS1 brought smiles with their cheerful performance of We've A Snowman To Make. The FS0 Moonbeams impressed everyone with Ten Tubby Snowmen, followed by the FS0 Rainbows, who performed The Angry Song with confidence and expression.

The FS2 boys added energy to the show with Mister Sun, and the performance concluded on a high note with That's A Job For Us by the FS2 class.

Every child performed with excitement and confidence, making the event truly special. The dedication of the teachers and the support of parents were clearly reflected in the children's success on stage.

It was a memorable day filled with joy, music, and festive spirit, marking a wonderful way to celebrate the holiday season. We wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Charlene Lee Jones
EYFS Coordinator




The Angry Song!
FS0 - Rainbows







Christmas Wish List Charity Campaign

Several members of the Student Council visited Scoala Primara Cotorca in Buzau to deliver the gifts that had been prepared with care, love, and generosity by the ISB community. We would like to sincerely thank our parents, staff, students, and the whole ISB community for their support during the Christmas Wish List Charity Campaign. The children welcomed us by singing Christmas carols and later received their gifts with great excitement, going home with big smiles on their faces.

"The charity gift delivery was very enriching. It felt wonderful to interact with the young children and deliver the gifts they wished for, especially when they would react happily to their presents. The charity reminded me about the true meaning of Christmas, which is to give back to the community and spread love, something we often forget nowadays. I really hope I will get the opportunity to do this next year too!" **Anastasia C, 11O**

"Delivering charity gifts to children in need changed how I see the holidays. The warm greetings from the excited children and the school staff 's friendly welcome enlightened our spirits. I was very happy to see the children' s excitement while waiting for their gifts. Most importantly, we handed them out to each child ourselves, seeing their joy alongside their parents and siblings. This showed me a new way to help others: even a small charity event can change the holidays. I am glad I took part and hope we can do it even better next year." **Shyrin S, 11S**

"I feel grateful and humbled being there, seeing the children's smiles and how much the gifts meant to them. I loved the experience because it was meaningful, eye-opening, and filled with genuine joy." **Annabella M, 8I**

"Joining the gift giveaway to children in need helped us see the real meaning of gift giving during the holidays. The school welcomed us warmly, and the children's big smiles as they waited made us happy. Watching their eyes light up as we handed over the gifts, made us very happy and fulfilled, filling our hearts with true holiday spirit. I am thankful I got a chance to be a part of this event and I wish to have this opportunity next year as well!" **Irina C, 11O**

"I was glad to participate in this campaign of giving and sharing and I enjoyed giving to the community. It was nice to see the joy in the children's faces and I hope to do this more." **Eric N, Y7**

ISB Student Council Team

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