

St Mary's Church of England Primary School & Nursery

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Young Voices 2022 – The O2 Arena, London (25th April)

St Mary's "are your performance ready?"

- White Young Voices T-shirt ✓
- VIP 25th Anniversary Lanyard ✓
- Torch ✓

"YES" was the reply and they certainly were!

Monday 25th April 2022 saw the long awaited trip to the O2 Arena in London. After weeks of rehearsing at school, the time for the KS2 St Mary's Choir to perform as part of Young Voices had finally come.

There was much excitement on the coach and no time wasted with the children and teachers embracing the opportunity to relax first then run through the songs whilst taking in the sights on the way.

As the coach approached London the enthusiasm increased with the route to the O2 taking the coach past a number of the London sights. With Miss Golden confidently in charge of the microphone, a tour officially began. The route took the coach very close to the Natural History Museum, The Victoria & Albert Museum, Trafalgar Square, Big Ben, The Houses of Parliament, Tower Bridge, The Tower of London and The London Eye. It was a beautifully sunny day and showed London at its best.

Once St Mary's had arrived at the O2, had lunch and found their seats, the afternoon was dedicated to rehearsing. The **8,000 children** present had all rehearsed at their individual schools but it was then time to pull it all together under the guidance of the official Young Voices Conductor **David Lawrence**.

It was quite an experience working with a conductor. Being under his instruction and following his cues was so important as he guided the singers in at the right time, allocated different singing parts to the children so they could either harmonise or sing two parts that answered one another, guided the children through the music and whether it needed to be sung softly or loudly and also when to stop singing! Watching him was key and he was fun, kind and patient.

The rehearsal also saw the children practising with the other acts that were part of the event. They learned how to Beatbox under the guidance of **The Beatbox Collective**, followed dance moves by **Urban Strides** with a view to competing against the audience during the actual evening performance.

'Be the best you can be'



DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH AWARD



Chief Executive Officer: Mrs Emily Massey

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By the end of the rehearsal at 5.30pm everyone was ready to perform.

It was a magical evening that opened with 'O Fortuna' from Carmina Burana followed by 'The Lion King Medley' complete with actions. 'Sing From Your Heart' was written specifically for the event and was clearly one of the most popular songs with the children, along with 'Power In Me'. 'Living Years' was a very powerful performance as the children supported singer **Nick Shirm** by singing and signing the chorus. The other songs were 'Mambo Italiano' and three medleys ('The Muppets Medley', 'The Beatles Medley' and 'Pop Medley'); all lots of fun and enjoyed very much by the children. The **Beatbox Collective** and **Urban Strides** had the audience participating as planned, much to the amusement of the children!

If you've watched the film of the event there were two songs which were edited so you wouldn't have seen the full coverage of the children singing with mezzo soprano **Laura Wright** when she performed 'Paradise' – such a simple part to sing with just one word but it was beautiful and worked so well. Similarly, the children supported **Ward Thomas** (an English modern country-pop duo) when they performed 'Carry You Home' which is a piece full of energy and again it worked brilliantly.

I would like to personally thank the staff at St Mary's for giving the children such a brilliant opportunity to perform at this fantastic event. It was such a fun and atmospheric day and I hope that this is something that they will always remember fondly; it was very, very special indeed.

Sarah Gilliam
Chair of Governors
5 May 2022

Feedback from the children:

Year 3 Pupil

I really enjoyed all the singing and the torches when the lights went out. I loved the opera / beatbox performance and would definitely go again.

Year 4 Pupil

It was an amazing experience! I've never seen a Mexican wave before and being part of something so huge and exciting I will never forget.

Year 5 Pupil

It was really fun! It was like we were a family all singing together.

Year 6 Pupil

Young Voices was a great experience and I am so glad I had the opportunity to sing at the O2.

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