Observation 26/06

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| **Observation schedule** | **Descriptive notes** | **Reflective notes** |
| *Interactions of choristers before rehearsal. Describe the overall mood and atmosphere.* | **The boys look happy and excited. Some boys seem a bit tired. A group of boys was busy making music on instruments on the stage. Another group of boys was playing the ball behind the choir stands. Some of the boys are waiting quietly for the rehearsal to resume. A few boys are also relaxing on their phones. Not much socialising is happening now. Boys are mingling in different cultural groups. One boy is sitting in the corner listening to music with earphones. A senior boy was speaking to the conductor.** | **The choir becomes a place where boys can become happy and excited to sing with their friends.**  **The boys enjoy the company of their peers before the start of a rehearsal. This evokes a sense of happiness amongst the singers.**  **Some boys find that the choir allows them to be relaxed.**  **The boys enjoy socialising with friends originating from different cultural groups.**  **It is evident that the conductor trusts and develops a healthy relationship with the choir leaders. This allows the senior boys to feel safe around a staff member of the school.** |
| *Rehearsal venue. Where is the rehearsal taking place?* | **The rehearsal is taking place in the school hall.** |  |
| *Start of rehearsal. What is being discussed/done prior to the start of rehearsal?* | **The conductor called for the choir to get ready for the rehearsal and move into their places on the choir stand. The choir leaders assisted the conductor by getting the boys ready. Head Chorister called choir lines and counted down from five seconds. The choir responded well and there was an immediate silence. Conductor mentioned to the choir if they were late to the rehearsal, they must do a push up per minute they were late. Conductor mentioned that the boys must put their cell phones in front with him on a desk. Conductor wants the choir to recap what they have done up to now and do a run through their touring programme. The choristers responded well and with excitement.** | **There is an immediate response when the conductor calls for the choir to get into their choir lines. There is a great sense of respect for the conductor in the choir.**  **The choir leaders take responsibility for always assisting the conductor with the discipline of the choir. The choristers have a lot of respect for the head chorister of the choir.**  **The conductor is very stern with the choir and takes the punctuality and overall discipline of the choristers very seriously.**  **It is evident that the choristers are extremely excited about their upcoming international tour. The running of the touring programme motivated the boys to work hard and to become focused on the rehearsal.** |
| *Warm-up. Describe the discipline and responsiveness of the choristers. Is the warm-up effective?* | **There wasn’t a warm-up for this session.** |  |
| *Rehearsal. What music is being rehearsed? Are the choristers disciplined and engaged? Is the conductor engaging effectively with the choir?* | **The choir started the rehearsal with the “Ancestors” medley. The conductor stopped the choir and asked them to perform with more energy, and the precision of the movements should be accurate. The choristers are extremely focused. When the choir finished the medley there was a lot of talking and fidgeting happening while the conductor was addressing the percussion section. Conductor mentioned that they will be doing a full run through the programme and that he will be timing it. The first piece of the programme is the “Ancestors” medley. The choir showed a lot of energy. The choir were suffering with a few intonation problems. The two soloists were blending very well with each other. The choristers were all looking at the conductor. The other two soloists for the Indodana part of the medley were blending well with each other and sang with good technique. In the tenor section I assume one tenor sang a wrong note and one of the younger boys looked to the back and gave him the look of “you need to fix that section”. The choristers are very disciplined and engaged into the music. The boys are all showing a great sense of musicality. The dynamics are extremely well done. The conductor is well engaged with the music and the choir. He did make a few comments in between to ask choristers to check their movements and notes in certain section. After the medley, the conductor commented that the piece took them eight minutes and 25 seconds. He then asked the choir to take a seat on the choir stands. There was a lot of talking and fidgeting happening in between. A few boys ran off to the bathroom. The conductor mentioned to the choir that he is making a list of the times of all their pieces. The second piece the choir will be doing is the Trinklied, composed by Schonberg. The conductor asked the choir to stay seated and speak the text with the right phrasing. The boys were very engaged. The conductor asked the choir to keep the tempo. He seems very stern with the correct phrasing of the German text. He asked the choir to be more robust with the text and asked the choir to not pronounce the text lazily. There was chatting amongst the senior boys in the choir. The conductor engages very well with the choir as he shows a lot of enthusiastic facial expressions while speaking the words. Another group of boys were mingling while the conductor addressed the choir about pronunciation. The musical leader reminded the conductor and bass group about certain words in the second verse. The conductor then asked the bass group to go through this section by themselves and this sounded very accurate and well done. Once again, the conductor was doing all the work without the aid of a musical score. The tenor group was asked to say their words with the correct phrasing. As the tenors were making mistakes, the conductor started to smile, and this caused the group to become uncertain with their words. The boys then stopped speaking and the conductor asked them to go through their words again. Whenever a group made mistakes with the words, there was some banter from the conductor and choir. The whole starts laughing at the group making mistakes. The conductor makes eye contact with each chorister in the group and gives them a smile as if he is expecting them to know their words otherwise, they will let the group down. Some boys struggled and this caused the choir to laugh at that specific chorister. The conductor then asked the choir to stand and sing through the piece. He will also be timing the piece. He also mentioned that the choir will always be staying in a semi-circle format. The choir started singing the piece. The choir sounds amazing, their sound changed a lot from the more African sound to a very strong German choral sound. Phrasing and musicality were well executed. There is a quartet singing in between, and this group blended well with another. The conductor asked one chorister to sing more confidently and stop fidgeting around. The choir laughed at the chorister and the singer seemed a bit embarrassed. The piece took two minutes and 10 seconds. During the transition of the second piece to the third piece, the head chorister mentioned that one of the boys was celebrating his birthday. The choir then sang “Happy birthday” to the chorister and the percussionists were playing on the instruments. The choir responded very energetically. The conductor mentioned to the choir after their celebrations that there was an old Kearsney tradition that if it was somebody’s birthday that the boys would tie each other to a tree outside and throw them with syrups and that the insects would come and bite the boy. The boys reacted surprised and started laughing. The third piece was “Sucker” from Jonas Brothers. Once again, the sound changed again to a more free and wider sound. The two choir leaders were standing in front with the conductor, they were checking the music and the movements of the choir. The conductor stood in front and performed the movements with the choir. There was a lot of chatting from the choristers when the conductor was addressing the percussionists. One boy was also walking around. The head choristers took one of the boys and double-checked certain movements. The conductor asked the choir to recap certain movements. There were many boys still making errors. There was a lot of chatting in between. The conductor demonstrates the movements accurately and with great energy. Some boys were looking around and seemed a bit disinterested. There was some fidgeting happening. The percussionists were chatting with one another. After a few takes with a certain section in the song, the boys responded very well and accurately toward the movements. A security guard entered the venue and asked to see the conductor. The two choir leaders then took responsibility and continued to run through. The two choir leaders assist the conductor with the movements of the choir. One boy asked the head chorister whether he could leave the rehearsal to go to the bathroom. One boy arrived late for rehearsal after getting a haircut. The conductor often asked certain sections in the choir to sit down if he wants to work on a specific movement or part in music. This helps him to identify the “weakest links”. If boys sat down, they were either playing games or texting someone on their phones. Two boys were kicking around a chair when asked to sit down. If boys were struggling with movements, the choir leaders would approach them and help them to get it right immediately. The conductor asked the choir to run through the entire piece from the beginning. The head chorister asked the choir to settle down and be ready, after that the conductor asked the choir to remove hats and beanies and any form of head gear. For the proper take, the choir was very focused, and the choir’s balance was much better. The movements were together and accurate. The conductor commented in between that the choir were rushing through the piece. It took the choir 3 minutes and 10 seconds to perform this song. The conductor told the percussionists that they were sounding poor and that they were playing their own ways. He was frustrated because they do not listen to what he was telling them to do and mentioned that they just ignore him if he gives instructions. The conductor told them that they should keep in mind the sound of the choir than their own percussive sounds. The conductor reminded the choir to keep in mind correct timings of certain movements.** | **It is evident that the conductor focuses on developing musical skills and expect choristers to perform the choreography of the music accurately.**  **The boys develop good concentration skills during choral rehearsals when focusing on the conductor and overall musicality of the music.**  **Choristers of Kearsney College develop good singing habits when singing in the choir and they are given the opportunity to perform solos in their programme.**  **Boys show good initiative when making mistakes by admitting their mistakes, or by other choristers assisting them with their voice parts.**  **It is evident that the boys enjoy learning and associating themselves with the new languages and cultures of the world.**  **The choristers enjoy the choral rehearsals as it is a safe space for the boys to enjoy learning new music.**  **Boys can gain self-confidence in choral singing as it becomes a space where opportunities such as singing solos can develop various life skills.**  **Participating in the choir at Kearsney College make choristers feel valued on their birthdays.** |
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| *Leaders’ address. How is the choir responding to the conductor or committee member? What is being mentioned/addressed?* | **The conductor concluded the rehearsal by reminding the certain focus groups to remain behind for their interviews.** |  |
| *Interaction of choristers after rehearsal. Describe the overall mood and atmosphere.* | **The other boys rushed out of the venue after the rehearsal. A few boys were immediately on their phones. Some of them mingled in their social groups.** | **The boys of the Kearsney College Choir enjoy the company of their friends in the choir after rehearsals.** |
| *Rehearsal venue. Is the venue neat and tidy at the end of rehearsal?* | **The rehearsal venue was not left tidy as there were a lot of jackets and gumboots lying around the choir stands.** |  |
|  | **Date and time: 26/06/2022** | **Signature of researcher: JL** |