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INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Local Schoolkids Sing for 10 Hours for Charity

By Maximillian Gill

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Almost 500,000 rubles was raised with the 10-hour music marathon. The money will go to the charities BBC's Children in Need and Diema's Dream.

Moscow schoolchildren, aged 3 to 15, recently raised nearly 500,000 rubles for charity with a 10-hour "music marathon."

Pupils at The International School of Moscow, which follows a British curriculum, performed continuously in aid of the British charity "Children in Need" set up by the BBC and "Diema's Dream," a foundation for disabled children in Russia.

James Langford, the school's head of Creative Arts, masterminded the epic day. Every year group took part in the marathon for at least an hour during the school day with the event culminating in a grand finale concert attended by parents and students last week.

Langford found inspiration for the day from his time at a school in the U.K. where he took part

in a similar event.

The majority of money raised came from sponsorship. One fifth-year student, Aleta Pushnya, managed to raise 77,000 rubles on her own. Other students busked in the canteen at lunchtime the week before the marathon in order to raise money for the cause.

"The number of students willing to share their performances in front of one another was phenomenal," Langford said. Many staff members also performed as part of the marathon.

Recitals included an African drum procession as well as original pieces written by students Katie Murphy, 13 and Anna Martin, 11.

"Everybody put in a lot of effort, and that showed in the final results," Murphy said. "The best part for me was watching the finale concert at the end."

"I have to say that it is scary knowing that your song will be played in front of so many people, but it is worth it since it helps to raise money for charity."

"My main idea was the thought that many, many people are suffering while others have so much. I tried to imagine what it must be like to depend on other people's donations to live — and how unfair it must feel."

Martin said that she was "really nervous" but that her inspiration came from the knowledge "that there were children less lucky than us, and I wanted them to know that we're are trying to help them by raising money."

The opportunity "to hear original songs of such maturity and quality from two very talented young people reminds me how privileged I am to be a teacher working with such students," Langford said.

The school wanted to support a charity in the U.K. as well as one local to Moscow. Langford hopes that the selected charities "give the event an international angle and relevance throughout our school and expat community."

Video links to some of the performances can be found on the school website, internationalschool.ru, where visitors can also follow links to make donations online to the supported charities.

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