Year 6 – Cromford Mill Autumn Visit

October 2023

On October 13th, Year 6 visited Cromford Mill as part of their History and Geography topic on The Industrial Revolution. Cromford was the location of Sir Richard Arkwright's innovative Water Frame, which modernised the cotton industry, putting Derbyshire at the forefront of the Industrial Revolution.

We began with the 'Arkwright Experience', an immersive 3D exploration of the fascinating archeological remains of the historic site. Arkwright told us how his ambition led him from humble beginnings to becoming the richest commoner in the country. He told us tales of his inventions, from wig-maker to Water Frame and why he chose Cromford as the heart of his cotton spinning empire.

After this, we embarked upon a tour of the purpose-built village of Cromford, which surrounds the iconic mills. We learnt about how the River Derwent was a natural source of power for the invention of the Water Frame. We walked down 'North Street', the home of the first mill cottages, and saw other human features including the sluice, The Greyhound Hotel and Cromford Village School. Luckily, we managed to escape from the 'lock up' (a local jail built in 1790 for the growing population of the village.)

After a delicious lunch break, we used ordinance survey maps and symbols to compare human and physical features of Cromford from 1841 to 2021. We explored the area using photographic sources and a compass to locate different landmarks. The children were excited to show off their compass skills back in school as part of their orienteering topic in PE.

Upon the return to school, we identified the human and physical features seen on our tour of Cromford, and located them using six-figure grid references on OS maps. Although this was a challenge, our geographers showed great resilience in applying their mathematical skills of co-ordinates.

"We learnt a lot more than we knew before! We know lots about Sir Richard Arkwright and the River Derwent." Hope, 6KH.

"It was really interesting, especially the Arkwright Experience!" Azaliya, 6KH.

Overall a fun and informative day was had by all!