

School Trip to Blist Hill Victorian Village 7/6/2011

There was a time in the history of England when you wouldn't have wanted to go anywhere near Blist Hill. As the birthplace of the Industrial Revolution, it was described as the nearest thing to Dante's inferno - a living Hell on Earth - a place of noise, flame, smoke where human beings of all ages worked till they dropped - a place, where people came from the poverty and famine of the countryside to work on the monotonous treadmill of the forge and the factory. Some of you will say how little life has changed!

Today, however, it is the most wonderful place to go - a place where we can rejoice in the inventiveness and entrepreneurialism of our forefathers, and where we can see how the geography of the Severn Gorge, with its coal and iron ore, was harnessed to make our country the wealthiest and most powerful in the world. Marvellous. Blist Hill is a fantastic living memorial to the lives of ordinary Victorian folk, going about their daily lives in this small village in Shropshire. All the shops and factories are open - and the children can change their new money to old in the bank, buy bread, cakes, sweets and fish and chips. They can see the frightening dentist's chair and instruments and wonder at the bottles of remedies in the pharmacy. See a replica of the first steam train chugging along its iron rails, have lunch in the Victorian gardens, play in the fairground and bump into a policeman on a bike. Not to mention seeing how candles were made, how letters were delivered and just what the inside of a Victorian house looked like complete with the fire burning in the grate.

To their credit, the pupils never stopped. They had as much enthusiasm at the end as they did at the beginning and it was wonderful to see their faces when they interacted with the museum's actors. Though when we finally made it back onto the coach some of the children did immediately go to sleep! As ever, they were a credit to the School and to their parents. On more than one occasion, people stopped the accompanying teachers to say how smart and polite Brooke House looked. We are getting used to that now wherever we go and it just makes us want to raise our already high standards even more.

All the children will have their own recollections of the day. However, there is so much more to see at Ironbridge that if you have a spare day in the holidays, you would all enjoy a family visit there. Have a wonderful time but watch out for the steamroller and the horse and carriage when you roll out of the pub!

Mr Jackson

