Our visit to Styal Mill

On Friday, September 27, we visited Styal Mill together with our exchange partners from St. Thomas More Catholic School in Crewe. Styal Mill, also called Quarry Bank Mill, is one of the greatest cotton mills of the Industrial Revolution, located in the village of Styal in Cheshire. Today it is a kind of museum and owned by the National Trust.

It was built by Samuel Greg in 1783 to spin cotton, an important business branch of the late 18th and 19th centuries. In the 1820s more than two thousand people found work there. We had a guided tour and were impressed how poor the working conditions were, especially for children, who also ate and slept in the Apprentice House. During our four-hour tour some of us even had the opportunity to slip into 19th century clothes which workers wore.

This was an outstanding experience and now we know how comfortable we are in modern clothes. There were much longer working hours than today, which was particularly hard for children.

The mill lies on the banks of the river Bollin, and water power has long been essential for the production of cotton, which was sent to nearby Manchester, the centre of the cotton industry in the UK. We learned that originally there were two wooden wheels for taking water from the river. Later, from 1818 on, there was one made of iron. The wheels were replaced at the beginning of the 20th century by water turbines and then by beam engines for steam power.

The visit to Styal Mills was interesting and showed us one of the most important manufacturing branches in 19th century Britain. However, most of us found it a bit too long, and unfortunately, it was raining cats and dogs that day.
Mill rules

The mill today: surrounded by beautiful gardens.