

## Visit to the Houses of Parliament.

Tuesday 10th December 2013

On arrival at Westminster station we were astounded to find how big the Houses of Parliament actually were. They looked like a palace out of a storybook. After going through security with minimal casualties (Neha's belt and Naseema's scissors) we went into the great hall. Despite it being cold we spent our time thoroughly enjoying and admiring the architecture and art that was on display.

We then were introduced to our tour guide, Roger. He walked us to the middle of the Houses, the point where the House of Commons met the House of Lords. This was also where we were finally joined by the ever punctual Anisa. As we were shown around, we marvelled at the art which was hanging on every wall. There were stunning portraits of monarchs and lords alike.



Next stop was the House of Commons, which sadly we were not allowed to go into directly as ministerial questions were taking place. We did however strike lucky again and were given the fantastic opportunity to view ministerial questions from the viewing gallery. After going through security and walking up countless stairs we were seated and eagerly watched the proceedings.

Then it was time for us to return to school. On our way out we were shown the brass plate in the Great Hall that was there in commemoration of the late Nelson Mandela. Then we made a quick stop at the gift shop to buy Mr. Phillips his "Chief Whip" mug which we are sure he will treasure forever. On our journey back to the station we went to visit Nelson Mandela's statue and memorial which was erected outside of the Houses of Parliament. After Asha, Naseema and Anisa's rescue mission for their scissors we were safely on our train home.

All in all this trip to the Houses of Parliament was unforgettable and has allowed me to see a practical application of the work on parliament we have been undertaking at AS. **Dilara Sangha Year 12 BM**



Whilst showing us around the Queen's dressing room we were told about Queen Victoria and shown that the monarchy aimed to live by the same values that were exhibited by King Arthur and although the paintings were sadly never finished, the idea was refreshing and inspiring. There was also a display of modern photography next to the throne on which Queen Victoria used to sit (complete with her infamous footstool).

After what seemed like an eternity of walking and standing we were taken into the House of Lords, only to be told that we could not sit down as we were not peers. Despite the disappointment we were told stories of corrupt monarchs and the speaker's black rod, which swiftly distracted us from the ache in our legs. In addition we were also very lucky as we were allowed to watch the introduction of the speaker, which was a welcome spectacle.



