

# Redstone Educational Academy

Independent school standard inspection report

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DfE registration number	330/6009
Unique Reference Number (URN)	137560
Inspection number	397683
Inspection dates	25–26 September 2012
Reporting inspector	Joanne Harvey HMI

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## Purpose and scope of the inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.<sup>1, 2</sup>

## Information about the school

Redstone Educational Academy is a Muslim secondary school situated in Balsall Heath, less than two miles from Birmingham City Centre. It was established over five years ago and provided part-time education until it registered with the Department for Education as an independent school and admitted only full-time students in September 2011. It occupies premises that were formerly used as a factory and offices. A substantial conversion programme has provided nine classrooms, a large multi-purpose hall, a library, an information and communication technology (ICT) suite, and administration rooms, together with a science laboratory which at the time of the inspection was being repaired because of flooding. There is a large area of hard standing at the rear of the building. Since the registration visit in July 2011, there has been considerable work to modify the internal layout of the building so that boys and girls can attend full time and be taught separately. They each occupy half of the building.

Redstone Academy provides full-time education for 152 students aged 11 to 16 years. The school is exceeding its registered number but the changes made since registration are sufficient to accommodate the present number. Many students are from Somali, Pakistani or Afro-Caribbean backgrounds and there are others from Great Britain and other European countries, particularly France and Belgium. The school assesses students before entry. There are currently no students with statements of special educational needs and, while many students have English as an additional language, all are proficient in English. All lessons, apart from Arabic, are conducted in English. Students are prepared for the IGCSE examinations and most transfer to sixth form education in both independent and maintained schools and colleges. This is the school's first Ofsted inspection since its registration.

The school's mission statement states: 'We believe that our children need to be inspired with a sense of virtue. Our children need to know about and believe the sincerity for the sake of Allah, honesty, respect, responsibility and courage are vital in laying the foundations for our future. We value the rich cultural diversity of the community. We aim to produce well balanced young individuals with a sense of good who are proficient learners.'

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<sup>1</sup> [www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/32/contents](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/32/contents).

<sup>2</sup> [www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2005/18/contents](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2005/18/contents).

## Evaluation of the school

The Redstone Educational Academy provides a good education for its students and meets all of the regulations for independent schools. The well-planned curriculum matches the interests, needs and abilities of students; as a result, they enjoy school and make good progress because of the good teaching and effective assessment. The provision for students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, as is behaviour. The school meets its aims well and enables students to become confident, articulate and well-rounded individuals. There are robust arrangements for safeguarding pupils and the provision for their welfare, health and safety is good: swift action has been taken to address the regulatory failures identified at the registration visit. Good care and attention is given to promoting students' well-being and enjoyment.

## Quality of education

Redstone Educational Academy provides a good quality of education. The curriculum is good and meets all the regulations for this standard. It ensures that the vast majority of students make good progress; for some, that progress is outstanding. The curriculum is broad and balanced, and takes account of National Curriculum expectations. In addition, students attend Islamic studies and regular Arabic lessons. Curriculum plans, which ensure the progression of knowledge and skills, are in place for all subjects and a good emphasis is given to the teaching of English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT). Other subjects studied include combined science, biology, physics, chemistry, art and design (in Years 7, 8 and 9 only), geography, history and personal, social and health education. Older boys have the opportunity to follow a course in business studies. Subjects are well resourced but the extended closure of the science laboratory currently limits students' opportunities to observe and conduct experiments.

All teachers place a strong emphasis on developing speaking, listening, reading and writing in English and this is universally done well. The mathematics curriculum has a good focus on developing students' capacity to think logically and to express and justify their ideas clearly. It results in students applying their learning well and solving complex problems with confidence. ICT is well provided for, both in discrete lessons and woven throughout the curriculum, to support learning in other subjects. There is a good balance between the secular subjects and Islamic and Arabic studies. The Islamic studies programme is carefully thought out and often outstandingly well taught. It gives the students the opportunity to deepen their knowledge and understanding of their faith and contributes well to their spiritual, moral and social development. In these lessons, there are plenty of worthwhile opportunities for discussion and reflection but relatively fewer opportunities to explore other religions in relation to Islam. Daily prayer enables students to practise their faith and develop further their sense of community. The Arabic programme concentrates on script and this is also done well by skilled practitioners, facilitating clear progression, but there is relatively less focus on modelled and taught

conversation. Physical education is more limited for girls who say they are frustrated that there are too few opportunities to be active outdoors; they feel that the taught lessons in the gym do not give enough variety or structure to their experiences. Students have suitable opportunities to respond emotionally and intellectually to sensory experience but fewer opportunities to create art. A partnership with the local art gallery, where these experiences are facilitated, is in its early stages. Responses from students and outcomes in spiritual, moral, social and cultural development confirm that the programme of study for personal, social and health education ensures a good understanding of a range of personal, health and social issues. Partnerships with other local schools are effectively supporting students' careers education. Students' good English, mathematical, ICT and personal skills ensure they are prepared well for the future.

The quality of teaching and assessment is good. Some outstanding teaching was seen during the inspection, and evidence from discussion and scrutiny of students' work indicates that this is typical. Students join the school with a wide range of knowledge and skills. Work seen in lessons and books, together with discussions with students, indicate that the vast majority are making consistently good and sometimes better progress. Most achieve at least what is expected for their age. Teachers have high expectations of students. Lesson planning is often detailed, and intended learning outcomes are clear and routinely shared with students. Teachers know their students well and relationships are positive and respectful. As a result, students enjoy their lessons and work hard. Basic skills, including spelling and grammar, are taught regularly and rigorously with teachers taking the time to give individual support. Teachers insist on students articulating their ideas and give them time to reflect and modify these. All teachers observed demonstrated their good subject knowledge and students' responses confirmed that teachers insist on the correct use of accurate vocabulary at all times. Evidence from several lessons confirmed that students' oracy skills are developed well. Note taking is confidently and automatically undertaken throughout lessons without students having to be told what to record. In the vast majority of lessons all students are suitably challenged. Very occasionally, work given is too challenging for those who find learning more difficult or the most able have to work through easier tasks with everyone else in the class before going on to work that challenges them. Students are required to apply their knowledge to solve complex problems for themselves and are encouraged to develop important skills to work independently and extend their own learning further. In the best lessons seen, teachers constantly circulated, checking understanding, addressing misconceptions, and asking individuals specifically-tailored questions in order to maintain the challenge.

Though teachers know their students well through regular assessments, whole-school systems have only recently been introduced in order to keep regular checks on how well students are doing in different subjects as they move through the school. The absence of this has limited the leadership's capacity to identify any potential weaknesses in teaching and deal with them swiftly. Similarly, though there is some excellent teaching in school, opportunities are missed to share this best practice widely and there are not sufficient checks in place to ensure that improvements in teaching happen swiftly and where they are needed most. Student's

books are regularly marked and often include positive comments which build their self-confidence and self-esteem. Where teaching is strongest, comments to identify students' next steps are the norm.

## **Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils**

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students is good and meets all the requirements. Teachers and other adults provide good role models for Islamic life and this has a positive impact on students' spiritual and moral development. The strong Islamic ethos ensures that students successfully develop a set of values, principles and beliefs which inform their perspective on life and their behaviour. Through their participation in Islamic studies and personal, social and citizenship programmes of study, students develop a good understanding of what is right and wrong, and have a clear understanding of their Islamic identity. As a result, students build trusting and respectful relationships with their peers and with their teachers. This is evident from how well students collaborate and cooperate and discuss issues in lessons and at social times, both with each other and with their teachers and other adults in school. They do this particularly maturely because of the emphasis teachers put on the development of oracy skills and self-confidence. One student said that the school had helped them to develop their self-confidence and given them the opportunity to learn from their mistakes without feeling embarrassed.

Students enjoy school and their behaviour, both in lessons and in the playground, is good. They relate well to one another, and are polite and courteous to visitors. In lessons, the vast majority settle quickly to their work and display extremely positive attitudes to learning. Students say there is no bullying in school and that, if there were, it would be dealt with effectively.

Students develop a sense of responsibility through, for example, raising money to help others less fortunate than themselves. However, they say they would like more opportunities to undertake roles of responsibility within the school and girls would like to have experience of being involved in enterprise activities. Students feel proud of their Islamic identity and have developed a strong sense of community and belonging, as commented on by one student: 'This is a friendly school, a brilliant community, it is peaceful because we have grown up together.' Another volunteered that: 'Teachers are fair, they trust you, and they understand you, because they understand Islam.'

Students' knowledge and understanding of their own cultures and beliefs are well supported by the Islamic and Arabic studies sessions. Students learn about the beliefs and practices of other faiths through religious education, but there are limited opportunities to help students learn about the cultures and traditions of other people around them. Students are taught about British institutions and services, and benefit from visitors to school, such as from the local police and visit local museums and galleries. They visit the local library regularly. They have a good understanding of how to keep safe and healthy; for example, they learn about e-safety and the dangers of drugs. They understand the need to eat healthily and to take exercise though girls said that they would like more opportunities to put this into practice in school.

The current register shows that attendance is good for many and satisfactory overall. A very few students have too much time off or come to school late and teachers have to support them to catch up. The school works with parents, carers and students to persuade them of the importance of coming to school every day and on time. Nevertheless, students' good behaviour and academic skills effectively support their future lives.

## **Welfare, health and safety of pupils**

The provision for students' welfare, health and safety is good. All regulations have been met. The school provides a calm, positive, supportive and nurturing environment. The small class sizes and good staffing levels mean that students are supervised well at all times. All safeguarding arrangements meet requirements. Staff recruitment procedures follow recommended guidelines and all staff and volunteers have undergone enhanced checks with the Criminal Records Bureau to confirm their suitability to work with children. All staff have received appropriate training in safeguarding and the headteacher and two other staff have attended higher level training in child protection procedures. Policies and practices to ensure the safety of the site and buildings are vigilantly applied. Good attention is given to health and safety through routine fire evacuations, checks on equipment and first aid procedures. All the required risk assessments are in place. Students report that they feel very safe in school and any concerns they have are quickly dealt with. The school has sensible plans in place to improve accessibility. The school actively promotes healthy eating and students have a clear understanding of how to keep themselves healthy. The school has the required number of qualified first aiders and policy and practice in this regard meets requirements.

## **Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors**

All adults, including those engaged through an employment agency and members of the proprietorial body, have been subject to the necessary checks to confirm their suitability to work with children. These are recorded on a single central register, as required.

## **Premises and accommodation at the school**

The premises have been transformed to provide an effective environment for learning. Swift action was taken to address issues in order to meet the requirements stipulated at the time of the registration visit. There are now appropriate facilities for students who are ill in a dedicated first aid room. The hard surface of the large outdoor space to the rear of the building has been repaired and is suitable for students' safe recreation and games. Classrooms are clean and tidy and flooring has been replaced with new carpet throughout much of the building, which is in excellent condition. There is a well-fitted ICT suite and classrooms are also well equipped with ICT equipment. The hall provides ample space for assemblies and physical education. All areas are maintained to good standards of maintenance and

decoration. The necessary periodic checks are carried out to the building and its services. The site is secured by perimeter fencing and closed circuit television. The science laboratory remains closed to students as, though newly refurbished, it then suffered considerable water damage. Repairs to a leaking roof have been made but science benches damaged by water penetration cannot be replaced until the middle of October.

### **Provision of information**

There is a range of information provided for parents and carers on the helpful school website, in the parents' handbook and prospectus, and through regular correspondence and detailed twice yearly reports. All of these are clear, accurate and up to date.

### **Manner in which complaints are to be handled**

The procedures for handling complaints meet all regulations.

### **Compliance with regulatory requirements**

The proprietor has ensured that the school meets all of The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, schedule 1 ('the Regulations').<sup>3</sup>

### **What the school could do to improve further**

While not required by regulations, the school might wish to consider the following points for development:

- fully implement whole-school systems to record and track students' achievement over their time at the school
- improve teaching so that all is as good as the best through the sharing of best practice and through the rigorous monitoring of its quality.

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<sup>3</sup> [www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2010/1997/contents/made](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2010/1997/contents/made).



## Inspection judgements

outstanding	good	satisfactory	inadequate
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### The quality of education

Overall quality of education		✓		
How well the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of pupils		✓		
How effective teaching and assessment are in meeting the full range of pupils' needs		✓		
How well pupils make progress in their learning		✓		

### Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Quality of provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development		✓		
The behaviour of pupils		✓		

### Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The overall welfare, health and safety of pupils		✓		
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## School details

<b>School status</b>	Independent
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary
<b>Date school opened</b>	September 2011
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll (full-time pupils)</b>	Boys: 89      Girls: 63      Total: 152
<b>Number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs</b>	Boys: 0      Girls: 0      Total: 0
<b>Number of pupils who are looked after</b>	Boys: 0      Girls: 0      Total: 0
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	£2985 in Years 7, 8 and 9 £3285 in Years 10 and 11
<b>Address of school</b>	466 Moseley Road, Birmingham, B12 9AN
<b>Telephone number</b>	0121 448 7933
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:headteacher@redstoneacademy.com">headteacher@redstoneacademy.com</a>
<b>Headteacher</b>	Hameed Alam
<b>Proprietor</b>	Redstone Educational Academy Ltd

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



27 September 2012

Dear Students

**Inspection of Redstone Educational Academy, Birmingham, B12 9AN**

Thank you for the welcome you gave to the inspection team when we visited your school last week. We enjoyed speaking with you: your views are really important to us.

We found that yours is a good school and can see why you all enjoy coming to school. This is evident in your positive attitude to work and your good behaviour. The adults at school take care to make sure you are safe and supported well. As a result, you grow in confidence and become well-rounded young people. Your spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Because of the support you all receive, the good teaching and curriculum, and the interesting things you are given to do, you make good progress in your work.

We would like your school to continue to improve, so we have asked them to do the following things.

- Make sure that all the teaching is as good as the best in the school.
- Fully implement systems to check on how well you are doing in all subjects so that the school's leaders can be sure that you are doing as well as you can.

Yours sincerely

Joanne Harvey  
Her Majesty's Inspector