

Redroofs Theatre School

26 Bath Road, Castle Hill, Maidenhead, Berkshire, SL6 4JT

Inspection dates 11–13 March 2014

Overall effectiveness	Good	2
Pupils' achievement	Good	2
Pupils' behaviour and personal development	Good	2
Quality of teaching	Good	2
Quality of curriculum	Good	2
Pupils' welfare, health and safety	Good	2
Leadership and management	Good	2

Summary of key findings

This school is good because

- Pupils make good progress and achieve well as a result of good and some outstanding teaching. They achieve particularly well in dance, drama and musical theatre.
- Leaders have ensured that teaching and achievement are good.
- The sixth form is good. Almost all pupils proceed to drama and theatre schools.
- Pupils behave well. The academic and work-related curriculum effectively promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Pupils feel safe, are eager to learn and engage well in lessons.
- Attendance has improved and is now above average.
- Pupils regularly perform in local and West End theatres, and on radio and television.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Not all staff record, analyse or evaluate information on pupils' progress well enough in order to ensure they are making the best possible progress.
- Teachers do not always demand high standards of presentation in pupils' written work.
- Teachers' guidance in their marking does not regularly correct pupils' mistakes or show them precisely how they can improve their work.
- Leaders do not provide teachers with consistently useful feedback on their teaching with clear targets for improvement.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets schedule 1 of The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, as amended by The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection took place with one day's notice.
- The inspectors observed 13 lessons or parts of lessons. They held informal discussions with pupils representing several age groups.
- There were 53 responses to the online survey (Parent View). Inspectors took account of the school's own surveys of parents and carers.
- The inspectors considered 22 responses to the staff questionnaire. They had discussions throughout the inspection with the proprietor, senior leaders and other staff.

The inspectors reviewed key documents and policies and scrutinised pupils' books and the school's information about pupils' attainment and progress.

Inspection team

David Scott, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Peter Callaghan

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Redroofs Theatre School is an independent day school situated in Maidenhead, Berkshire. It caters for boys and girls aged from nine to 19 years who wish to specialise in musical theatre, dance and creative industries. The school is part of Redroofs Holdings, which includes a theatrical agency and theatre.
- The school is registered for up to 100 pupils. At the time of the inspection, there were 84 pupils on roll, almost all of White British heritage. There are more girls than boys. There are no pupils with a statement of special educational needs. A few pupils have a diagnosis of dyslexia, for which they receive specialised support.
- The main school building is located in a former residential property, which has undergone extensive remodelling in order to provide specialist facilities. The school utilises additional provision at Redroofs Littlewick Green for art lessons, and the Novello Theatre in Ascot for theatre studies and performance.
- The school opened in 1981 and was previously inspected in February 2011.
- The school sees itself as a place where 'individuality and work ethic are key to success'. It aims to provide an 'enviable dance and performing arts curriculum' within a family atmosphere.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that all groups of pupils make the best possible progress by:
 - insisting on the highest standards of presentation in pupils' written work
 - improving the consistency and regularity of marking so that it corrects mistakes and provides pupils with clear and detailed signposts for improvement
 - ensuring that teachers' planning makes good use of information about pupils' progress, especially for the most able pupils
 - ensuring staff are more confident in accurately recording and assessing rates of pupils' progress and how it compares with national expectations.
- Strengthen the effectiveness of leadership in checking on the quality of teaching by:
 - providing teachers with precise feedback about their performance and coaching with clear targets to improve their teaching
 - improving tracking systems for recording, analysing and evaluating information about pupils' progress in lessons and over time.

Inspection judgements

Pupils' achievement

Good

Pupils make good progress and achieve well, due to effective teaching, an innovative curriculum and pupils' hard work. Pupils arrive with a wide range of skills and experiences, from below to above the expected level of skills for their age. By the end of Year 6, pupils achieve compared to their peers nationally in reading, writing and mathematics. At GCSE, results are above average. In 2013, pupils' attainment was stronger in English than in mathematics, particularly at the higher levels. Sixth-form pupils do well in the vocational performing arts qualification, with almost one in four pupils achieving the highest award of triple distinction. Pupils make exceptional progress in dance, drama and performing arts as a result of the highly specialised coaching they receive, with many gaining high grades in professional dance qualifications. A few pupils who have a diagnosis of dyslexia or have other special educational needs are provided with individual support so that they achieve as well as their peers in the school. Achievement is not outstanding because not all pupils, particularly the most able, make the progress of which they are capable in some of their academic subjects, such as French and humanities. Almost all students proceed to either dance or musical theatre colleges or to drama school, film school or university.

Pupils' behaviour and personal development

Good

The behaviour and personal development of pupils are good. They demonstrate generally positive attitudes to learning and engagement in lessons. Attendance has improved and is now similar to the average figures for maintained schools. Pupils respond well to challenge, particularly in their dance and theatre studies, and demonstrate high levels of concentration and motivation. Relationships between staff and pupils are characterised by mutual respect, positive encouragement, patience and high expectations. Pupils behave well around the school, and in lessons, though occasionally younger pupils lose concentration and can become distracted. Pupils feel safe in school because of the high levels of trust that exist between staff and pupils, so that they are confident to ask for support should a concern arise. Pupils feel free from harassment and say that bullying is rare in their school. They are taught how to stay safe online. They look after each other well, showing concern and support when they are upset or things do not go according to plan. Behaviour and personal development are not outstanding, for example, because not all pupils have the necessary skills to work without being over-reliant on adult supervision in their learning.

The promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness is woven into the school day and meets the requirements of the independent school standards. Pupils have the opportunity for spiritual reflection through assemblies at the beginning of each day. Cultural diversity is celebrated and respected, particularly through pupils' participation in dance and musical theatre. Pupils display high levels of tolerance and respect for each other, including those of different faiths and beliefs. They visit places of interest, which extends their understanding of how society works and gives them a broad general knowledge of public institutions and services in England. Pupils regularly take part in performances to raise funds for charities such as Rosie's Rainbow fund, which supports sick and disabled children in hospital and the local community. They also participate in music therapy sessions at the John Radcliffe Children's Hospital and Stoke Mandeville Hospital.

Through the innovative and diverse curriculum pupils have many opportunities to participate in a wide range of after-school clubs, educational visits and productions, with many performing regularly in West End shows or appearing on radio and television. Teachers have received guidance to ensure that planned lessons and activities will be free from partisan political or religious views and that, where any political issues are discussed, a balanced view is always presented.

Quality of teaching**Good**

The quality of teaching is mostly good, with some that is outstanding, which enables pupils to achieve well. Pupils like their teachers and there are high levels of respect and cooperation between all adults and pupils. This helps them to make good progress and develop effective study habits. Teaching is not outstanding because information from assessments is not always used well to plan work at the right level to meet the different needs of pupils, especially the most able pupils. The quality of presentation of pupils' written work is not consistently high enough. There are examples of high-quality presentation in pupils' writing, but too few. Marking does not always contain sufficiently detailed advice to help pupils understand how to improve their work and what are their next steps in learning.

When learning is most effective, good consideration is given to the needs of pupils so that work is set at the right level. This was well demonstrated in a Year 9 dance lesson, where pupils were totally absorbed in developing their choreographic skills. Here the teacher carefully planned activities and exercises whereby pupils built-up their repertoire of dance steps in different musical styles, so that by the end of the lesson they were able to choreograph and perform a short sequence. Throughout the lesson the teacher skilfully used brief question-and-answer sessions to check pupils' progress in grasping new skills, knowledge and understanding. She also provided regular opportunities for pupils to give feedback on each other's performance. As a result, pupils thoroughly enjoyed the lesson: as one pupil commented when describing the musical style she had just choreographed, 'I just love it so much'. However, such good practice is not consistent across the school, and as a result, the most able pupils are not always challenged sufficiently. The planning of learning is uneven in quality: there is some very good planning, but also minimal planning which takes too little account of information on pupils' prior learning. Not all staff are confident in accurately assessing the rate of pupils' progress and how it compares with national expectations.

Quality of curriculum**Good**

The range of subjects and courses provided is good, meets all requirements and enables pupils to achieve well. The school provides a programme of academic and work-related courses which are designed to match and enhance pupils' range of skills and abilities. Pupils of compulsory school age have sufficient breadth in their studies up to GCSE, including examination classes in English (literature and language), mathematics, science, drama and dance. Additional courses in art, French and humanities together with suitable topics in personal, social and health education (PSHE), ensure that the requirements for the Key Stage 4 work are met. All pupils are entered for GCSE dance in Year 10. This enables them to devote more time to their academic studies in Year 11. In the sixth form, all pupils study the vocational performing arts qualification. Also, they are able to add options in musical theatre, acting and media, and a dance teaching qualification.

As a theatre school, Redroofs provides specialist education for all age groups in dance, drama, singing and musical theatre studies. This work-related strand of the work undertaken is designed to develop and enhance pupils' talent, raise self-esteem, instil the importance of self-discipline and a strong work ethic that will prepare them for the next stage of their career. All pupils have the opportunity to take nationally recognised specialist qualifications in dance and drama. In addition, all pupils receive a weekly vocal lesson specialising in singing technique and repertoire.

Pupils have many opportunities to practise and develop their information and communication technology skills in other subject areas. Provision for physical education is in the dance and performing arts, where fitness training and exercise are included in abundance. Swimming and many extra-curricular dance clubs ensure pupils are provided with opportunities to participate in physical activities, which pupils state are well attended and enjoyable. The wide range of trips and visits, and theatre performances at a range of venues, both locally and in London, supports pupils' understanding of the world of work, career opportunities, and their own place in society.

Pupils' welfare, health and safety**Good**

Arrangements for pupils' welfare, health and safety are good and all the regulations are met. The school has devised and implemented an appropriate range of policies and procedures, including those for child protection, health and safety and anti-bullying. Twelve staff are trained in first aid to meet the needs of all age ranges. There are appropriate policies for the positive management of behaviour and the prevention of bullying.

Arrangements for the safeguarding of the pupils are good. The school has ensured that all staff are trained at an appropriate level. Staff have been rigorously checked for their suitability to work with children and the information is held on the required single central register of staff appointments. Risk assessments are carried out on all aspects of the school and for off-site activities. The staff are aware of the potential risks posed by the pupils' behaviour and these are taken into account in the planning of activities and in the detailed risk assessments on each pupil. A fire risk assessment has been carried out and is reviewed annually. All fire equipment is checked and fire drills take place regularly. There are opportunities within the curriculum for the pupils to consider healthy lifestyles, with opportunities for regular exercise through their dance and music theatre studies. Healthy eating is encouraged and studied through learning topics in PSHE. Pupils have good access to water throughout the day and understand well the benefits of exercise. Admission and attendance registers meet the regulations.

Leadership and management**Good**

The leadership and management of the school are good and leaders have ensured that pupils achieve well. The proprietor has ensured that all requirements of the independent school standards are met. There are robust policies and procedures in place to ensure safeguarding requirements are met. The quality and range of subjects and courses in the curriculum and teaching have enabled pupils to make good progress. There is a strong commitment by all staff to the care and support for pupils' well-being and success. Leadership and management are not outstanding because leaders have not ensured that all staff are confident in recording, analysing and evaluating information on pupils' progress. However, school leaders recognise this issue and have already appointed a member of staff to take responsibility for improving this aspect. Also, teachers have not always received clear feedback about their performance in the classroom and have not been set clear targets for improvement. The headteacher has begun a planned formal process of monitoring teaching and learning and there are plans to appraise staff at the end of the academic year.

Senior leaders have created an energetic and enthusiastic community where performing arts are practised and celebrated throughout the school day. All staff support this aim and state that they are proud to be members of the school community. However, a few felt more could be done by school leaders to promote and enhance their own training and development. The premises and accommodation meet requirements and are suitable and safe for learning. Effective use is made of the accommodation, and plans are in place to re-model a downstairs classroom in order to improve shower, toilet and medical room facilities. Parents and carers who responded to the online Parent View questionnaire expressed strong support for the school and its achievements. In addition, inspectors received a number of emails from parents and carers expressing their sincere gratitude for the school's support for the education of their child. Suitable information is made available for parents and carers through a comprehensive school website, including access to appropriate policies. The complaints procedure meets requirements.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	A school which provides an exceptional quality of education and significantly exceeds minimum requirements.
Grade 2	Good	A school which provides a high quality of education that exceeds minimum requirements.
Grade 3	Adequate	A school which meets minimum requirements but needs to improve the quality of education it provides.
Grade 4	Inadequate	A school where minimum requirements are not met and the quality of education has serious weaknesses.

School details

Unique reference number	110167
Inspection number	441433
DfE registration number	868/6018

This inspection was carried out 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.

Type of school	Theatre School
School status	Independent day school
Age range of pupils	9–19 years
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	84
Proprietor	Sam Keston, Carolyn Mayling, June Rose
Headteacher	Sam Keston
Date of previous school inspection	2–3 February 2011
Annual fees (day pupils)	£11,516–£13,037
Telephone number	01628 674092
Email address	info@redroofs.co.uk

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