

Redroofs Theatre School

Independent School

Inspection report

DCSF Registration Number	868/6018
Unique Reference Number	110167
Inspection number	316950
Inspection dates	14-15 November 2007
Reporting inspector	Jill Bainton AI

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 162A of the Education Act 2002 (as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005).

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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, in order to advise the Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Information about the school

Redroofs Theatre School is an independent school for boys and girls, which was opened in 1981 by the current proprietor. It is held in detached premises in a residential area of Maidenhead. There are currently 64 pupils aged 9 to 16 years of age. The academic headteacher has been in post since January 2007. The heads of dance and drama oversee the performing arts curriculum. Admission is by audition. Pupils are all members of the Redroofs Theatrical Agency. This is the first inspection of the school under s162A of the Education Act 2005.

Evaluation of the school

Redroofs Theatre School has a distinctive character and it provides a good quality of education and care. Through good teaching, using a suitable academic and vocational curriculum and high quality relationships which value pupils as individuals, they make good progress. According to one older pupil this is '*not just a school but a life*' and pupils report that they enjoy their school life. There are a number of regulations which the school does not meet.

Quality of education

The curriculum is generally good. There are written schemes of work, some of which are more detailed than others. There is a wide range of academic subjects taught during the morning, as the afternoon is mostly devoted to vocational lessons in the performing arts. Pupils have the opportunity to learn design technology through their artwork but there is presently no information and communication technology (ICT) taught at the school. The pupils' results at GCSE are commendable, especially in English and mathematics. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are very effectively promoted through both the academic and vocational lessons, for example through reading play scripts in a history topic and through the performing arts subjects. Pupils have lessons in tap, jazz, ballet and modern theatre dancing, musical theatre, drama and singing. The syllabi of the two main accredited dance examining boards are used effectively to ensure that pupils move progressively through the exam grades and many pupils attain higher grades at a young age. Personal social and health education (PSHE) and citizenship are taught and pupils are gaining a sound understanding of the world around them. There is some provision for advice on future careers but pupils feel that this could be extended. Visits and visitors to school

further enrich learning, especially in vocational subjects. Currently the pupils are eagerly awaiting a visit to the musical Billy Elliot.

The teaching and learning is good with some outstanding features, notably the trusting, open relationships between the staff and pupils. The combination of the academic and vocational disciplines gives pupils tremendous self-confidence and motivation to learn. Pupils are enthusiastic about the school and value the opportunities to participate in performance, such as in singing lessons where the experienced teacher and the pupils themselves give the least confident pupils tremendous support. Currently many pupils are busy preparing for an end of term pantomime. The teaching in both the academic and vocational lessons is generally well planned and staff have good subject knowledge. This ensures that pupils are well taught, learn effectively and make good progress. Although staff have a good understanding of the needs of pupils and their prior attainment these are not always taken into account in planning. During some lessons the learning objectives are unclear, pupils are not given clear targets to work towards and there are missed opportunities at the end of lessons to review learning. Assessment is good. Parents are given a written report annually and consultation evenings are being introduced this term. Homework is used effectively to consolidate learning in class. Resources are adequate and used well, although there is no use of ICT.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils

Overall, the provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is outstanding. Their outstanding moral and social development is evident in their outstanding behaviour and positive relationships. Pupils' spiritual and cultural development is good with many opportunities to experience happiness, awe and wonder, through the vocational subjects especially. They have opportunities to reflect and improve on their own performances. However, there are some missed opportunities for spiritual development during assemblies. Pupils learn effectively about their own culture and that of others through the performing arts, literature and dancing. Pupils are polite and proud of their school and are courteous to staff and visitors.

The PSHE curriculum ensures that they have a good knowledge of public institutions, for example some pupils are currently studying the European Union. Pupils enjoy their lessons and are well prepared for their future economic well being. They stay fit and healthy through the effective provision for performing arts. This is a happy school and many pupils confirmed that they love their school and particularly enjoy the performing arts but also say '*The work is good, the teachers really help you*'. They regard themselves as one large family and all are friends together. They mix very well at breaktimes, eat sociably together at lunchtime and all seem very relaxed during the school day.

Welfare, health and safety of the pupils

Appropriate policies and procedures are not in place, which meet current guidelines. As a result, provision for the welfare, health and safety of the pupils is inadequate. The school is not an unsafe place to work and learn and staff ensure good care for the pupils. The school has an anti-bullying policy, which is fully implemented and the pupils report that there is no bullying. The school is aware of safeguarding issues but the policy does not reflect up-to-date guidance and the designated child protection officer has yet to attend appropriate training. The pupils make regular visits outside school but the policy and procedures are not sufficiently robust and do not reflect the care taken by staff to ensure that pupils are safe.

The school carries out regular fire drills but has not yet undertaken a fire risk assessment. The school has not carried out a detailed health and safety risk assessment on all areas of the premises. The school has one staff member with first aid training but she is not always on site and they do not have a written policy. The school management responded very promptly when informed about these omissions and took immediate action to begin to address them. All pupils are encouraged to eat healthily, but not all pupils bring as healthy a packed lunch as they could. The attendance and admission registers are kept according to regulations. The school has not yet fulfilled its duties with regard to the Disability Discrimination Act.

Suitability of the proprietor and staff

The school checks all staff to ensure their suitability to work with children and holds a single central register of staff. The staff appointment procedures do not include a health check on the staff.

School's premises and accommodation

The premises and accommodation are satisfactory. The school is held in a large detached house, which has been adapted for use as a school. There are several dance studios, an art room and a dining area. Some of the classrooms are small and can only take small numbers of pupils and some are used to access other rooms due to the nature of the building. Some of the wall bars in the dance studios are loose and unsafe. A new studio is currently being built at the rear of the premises and the school has permission to build additional accommodation and make alterations to the building. The school is in need of redecoration and the standard of flooring is unsatisfactory. The management has plans in place for refurbishment. The large rear playground is currently out of use due to the building work and the school has plans to resurface some of this area to provide a new safe playground. The school does not have appropriate facilities for pupils who are ill.

Provision of information for parents, carers and others

The school provides parents, carers and others with a satisfactory range of information. Some of the information in the current prospectus and parents'

handbook is out of date and some of the required information is not available. The school has plans for a new prospectus. A large number of parents responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire and expressed a high degree of satisfaction with the school, all believe that their children enjoy their school life. Some parents do not feel that the school keeps them sufficiently informed about their child's progress; the school has plans to address this.

Procedures for handling complaints

The school has a set of procedures, which meets the regulations. Some parents were unaware of these procedures, which the school has now addressed.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school meets all of the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2003 as amended January 2005, with the exception of those listed below.

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety (standard 3) and must:

- ensure that all staff receive safeguarding training in line with Department for Children, Families and Schools (DCFS) guidance *Safeguarding children and safer recruitment in education (2007)* (paragraph 3(2)(b))
- prepare a policy for health and safety on visits outside the school which reflects current DCSF guidance (paragraph 3(2)(c))
- ensure that the school has regard to the DCSF guidance *Health and Safety; responsibilities and powers* (DCSF 0803/2001) (paragraph 3(4))
- carry out a fire risk assessment and ensure that all drills are recorded accurately (paragraph 3(5))
- devise a written first aid policy and ensure that trained first aiders are on site at all times (paragraph 3(6)).

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of suitability of proprietor and staff (standard 4) and must:

- ensure that appropriate procedures have been carried out to check the health of staff prior to appointment (paragraph 4(2)(a))

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of the premises and accommodation (standard 5) and must:

- ensure that all rooms used by pupils do not compromise their health and safety (paragraph 5(j))
- provide appropriate facilities for pupils who are ill, in accordance with the Education (School Premises) Regulations 1999 (paragraph 5(l))
- improve the standard of decoration throughout the school (paragraph 5(q))
- improve the standard of the flooring throughout the school (paragraph 5(s))
- provide appropriate safe outdoor play space (paragraph 5(t)).

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of the provision of information for parents, carers and others (standard 6) and must:

- provide the name of the headteacher (paragraph 6(2)(a))
- provide a contact number and address for the proprietor on which they may be contacted at all times (paragraph 6(2)(b))
- provide particulars of the school's policy on and arrangements for admission, discipline and exclusions (paragraph 6(2)(e)).

In order to comply with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 2002 the school should devise a three-year accessibility plan.

School details

Name of school	Redroofs Theatre School
DCSF number	868/6018
Unique reference number	110167
Type of school	Theatre
Status	Independent
Date school opened	1981
Age range of pupils	9-16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	Boys: 23 Girls: 41 Total: 64
Annual fees	£ 6,714 - £ 7,683
Address of school	26 Bath Road Castle Hill Maidenhead Berkshire SL6 4JT
Telephone number	01628 674092
Fax number	01628 822461
Email address	Hcocksedge@btconnect.com
Headteacher	Mrs H Cocksedge
Proprietor	Mrs J Rose
Reporting inspector	Jill Bainton AI
Dates of inspection	14-15 November 2007