

OYY Lubavitch Girls' School

Independent School

Inspection report

DCSF Registration Number	355/6028
Unique Reference Number	106004
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Inspection dates	2–3 July 2008
Reporting inspector	Caroline Broomhead HMI

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

Oholei Yosef Lubavitch Girls School is a Jewish school based on the teachings of Lubavitch philosophy. It is an independent day school for girls aged three to 16 years of age, and boys aged three and four years are admitted to the nursery. There are currently 89 pupils on roll; 74 girls and 15 boys. One child has a statement of special educational need and 10 have English as an additional language. The school's aim is to provide the girls with a sound Jewish and secular education within the Lubavitch traditions, laws and values and to prepare them to go on to seminary college when they leave. The school is owned and maintained by the Lubavitch community and admits pupils from Manchester and other towns in the North West of England. There are two headteachers who share the role. The school was last inspected in November 2003.

Evaluation of the school

The school provides a satisfactory standard of education. The pupils enjoy coming to school and make satisfactory progress in their learning. They benefit from good individual guidance and support in small class groups. The carefully structured *Limudei Kodesh* (Jewish Studies) curriculum is well taught and most pupils make good progress in this aspect of their studies. The school works closely with families but its provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety is inadequate because procedures for recruiting and training staff are not sufficiently rigorous and do not meet regulations. The premises are in a poor condition and pose health and safety risks.

Quality of education

The satisfactory curriculum is divided into *Limudei Kodesh* (Jewish Studies) and *Limudie Chol* (secular subjects); it promotes pupils' literacy, numeracy, speaking and listening, and personal development well across both strands. However, the planning and use of time for secular studies is weak and this limits the range of experiences and opportunities for pupils to develop breadth and depth in skills, knowledge and understanding in some subjects such as science, geography, music and art. Although these subjects are broadly based on the National Curriculum, planning is not sufficiently detailed to ensure that pupils can progress in their

learning. Planning and provision for English, mathematics, history and French is more robust and results in pupils achieving average or above results in GCSE by the time they leave school. The school is currently unable to offer information and communication technology (ICT) or any other technology subject on a regular basis due to lack of facilities. Provision for physical education (PE) is limited to half an hour per week for primary aged children; there is no time allocated within the secondary timetable for PE. Cross curricular links between *Kodesh* and secular studies take place but such work is usually opportunistic and not planned for. As a result, teachers are not aware of the skills that need to be taught in all areas of the curriculum and opportunities are lost to fully develop pupils' understanding across both strands of the curriculum. Personal, social and health education is given prominence and permeates all aspects of school life but there is no formal programme to support teachers' planning for this.

Children in the Reception class do not follow the Foundation Stage curriculum or work towards the early learning goals. The school plans to introduce this later this year. Reading and writing in English are less well developed than expected at the end of Foundation Stage because children in Nursery and Reception are taught the Hebrew alphabet first. Speaking and listening are well developed. Mathematical development is at the expected level, with greater emphasis on understanding number than other areas. Reception children do not have access to the outdoor learning area and opportunities for role play and creative play are limited to the rare occasions when they visit the Nursery.

In the Nursery children have access to the six areas of learning outlined in the Foundation Stage curriculum. During free play children are given the opportunity to use all areas within the classroom and appropriate resources are provided for this. Observations of children's progress against the Foundation Stage Profile, which was introduced in September 2007, take place regularly but staff are at an early stage of using assessment information to plan next steps in learning.

The curriculum for *Kodesh* is good and is being further developed. Particularly impressive is the clear guidance for teachers in *Chumash* (Bible Studies) and *Chassidus* (Jewish Philosophy) within the senior school. There is clear progression across year groups in both skills and understanding of *Kodesh*. Hebrew reading is taught in the nursery and completed towards the end of Year 1. Hebrew writing is taught well throughout the school, as is *Parsha* (Weekly portion of the Bible), Jewish Holidays and Jewish General Knowledge. Jewish history is taught from Key Stage 2 upwards. *Chumash* is taught from Year 2 with *Rashi* (commentary on *Chumash*) being taught from Year 4. *Pirkei Avos* (Ethics of the Fathers) and *Chassidus* are taught from Year 7. The pupils develop skills and knowledge of practical Classical Hebrew.

Teaching and assessment are satisfactory with some strengths. Relationships are good and pupils have positive attitudes to learning. They usually listen well and develop good concentration skills. Where teaching is good teachers recap on

previous learning, carefully lead pupils on to the next stage in the lesson, use a good range of interesting visual resources to stimulate pupils' imagination and interest, and incorporate well-considered aspects of spiritual, moral, social and cultural education, as well as units of study from other subjects. Pupils' learning is good in this context. Teachers make good use of questioning enabling pupils to think more deeply about their work. In their enthusiasm, some pupils cannot resist calling out their answers and this is not always challenged so prevents others from contributing to discussion. In the good *Kodesh* lessons teachers had a clear picture of what to teach and what pupils needed to learn. Regular assessment has led to suitable intervention programmes being put in place. Weaker lessons lacked such clarity and were more worksheet based, with teachers responding only when pupils could not carry on as they did not understand the work. Classroom resources are of poor quality limiting pupils' learning. Teachers' prior knowledge of pupils is based on knowing them well as part of a small community. This intuitive knowledge is used effectively in lessons to guide and support pupils in their learning, but is not always linked in any formal way to planning or assessment.

The approach to assessment is inconsistent across the curriculum. In the *Kodesh* subjects assessment of pupils' progress is good overall; elsewhere there is little systematic formalised assessment. Schemes of work do not have links to National Curriculum levels that are used and understood by all staff. Where purchased schemes are used or a prescribed syllabus is being followed, assessment is better because teachers judge progress against age appropriate materials and external expectations. Marking usually indicates whether or not pupils have got the correct answers but rarely offers suggestions for how to improve. Most but not all pupils take pride in their work and how it is presented.

Pupils generally achieve average or above average results in the national tests taken in English and mathematics in Years 6 and 9. The pupils make good progress in *Kodesh* studies and achieve good grades in GCSE Biblical Hebrew at the end of Year 10. The standards they reach in GCSE in Year 11 suggest that they make at least satisfactory progress in English, mathematics, history and French but their progress in other subjects is barely satisfactory because of insufficient planning and time available. Results from examinations and tests are not tracked year on year so the school is not able to make secure judgements about whether pupils are progressing as well as they could.

The pupils make particularly good progress in their speaking and listening and by secondary age are able to articulate their views in a considered and rational manner. Children in the nursery and Reception classes make satisfactory progress and systems for tracking their progress are beginning to improve.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils

Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. In this supportive environment they grow in self confidence and self esteem. Staff have high expectations of behaviour and stress the importance of being good role models. This results in good behaviour and pupils develop sound moral values. The pupils have an excellent knowledge of their own religion and culture but only satisfactory knowledge of other religions and cultures. The school puts much emphasis on teaching pupils to emulate the sterling *Middos* (character traits) which underpin the school's aims and ethos, *Davening* (prayer) makes a valuable contribution to pupils' spiritual development. Pupils *daven* with feeling and from the heart. The pupils take seriously their responsibilities both within and outside the school day. They care for younger pupils, lead performances and become involved in community activities such as visiting the elderly. The values of honesty and empathy, which underpin good citizenship pervade all aspects of the school. In a Year 1 lesson pupils designed a *Tzedokah* (charity box) and were told a story encouraging them to give to charity with their pocket money. They occasionally learn about the lives of people in other countries, for example, when natural disasters such as the Asian Tsunami occurred. However, they have insufficient opportunities to learn about the public institutions and services in England. As they get older they take part in activities further afield such as the leadership course, which those in Year 11 are currently following in London. Through links with extended families some are able to visit other countries and as part of their planning for moving on to a seminary college older pupils attend a convention in New York.

Welfare, health and safety of the pupils

In this close-knit community people look after each other well and the pupils feel safe and happy at school. They also understand the importance of eating a healthy diet and maintaining a healthy lifestyle. However, there is too much informality and lack of rigour in the school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils. As a result, the provision for their welfare, health and safety is inadequate. The school has not kept up to date with changes to regulations and therefore its procedures and staff training relating to child protection do not meet current requirements. Whilst the school has written health and safety policies in place, it does not always adhere to them and as a result some parts of the school are not as clean or well maintained as they should be. For example, in the Reception classroom, which doubles as a dining area, the flooring is in a dangerous condition and cupboard doors are hanging off their hinges. Female staff and visitors share the same toilets as the secondary girls and this is not acceptable practice. Since the last inspection the school has installed a well equipped disabled toilet and changing area and this is a welcome improvement to the provision.

Suitability of the proprietor and staff

The school does not always follow its own written procedures and has recruited staff without taking up two references, usually because the applicants are known to the headteacher. In addition, two staff who have been appointed to the school since 2004 have not been subject to enhanced Criminal Records Bureau checks as required by regulations. The headteachers were unaware of this requirement and are taking steps to ensure the checks are carried out immediately.

School's premises and accommodation

The premises are in a poor state of repair and decoration and in places are hazardous. They are used by both the school and the wider community and this presents the school with significant challenges to maintain an acceptable minimum standard of hygiene for all users. Outside the school has benefited from a recently built spacious ball court area, funded by the local authority, and this is used for playtimes and by primary pupils for PE. A small enclosed grass play area is available for nursery children.

Provision of information for parents, carers and others

The school is in close contact with parents and provides regular reports on pupils' progress. Some parents are unsure about the school's policy and procedures for dealing with complaints. During the inspection the school updated its handbook for parents to include information required by the regulations, including handling complaints, and the school was making arrangements for this to be sent to all parents straight away. The school does not provide an annual statement of income and expenditure for local authorities who place and fund pupils with statements of special educational need as required by regulations.

Procedures for handling complaints

The school's procedures for handling complaints comply with regulations in all but one respect; they do not make clear that the complainant has the right to attend and be accompanied to a panel hearing if he/she wishes to do so.

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 the curriculum (standard 1) and must:

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- ensure that the curriculum gives pupils of compulsory school age experience in the following areas of learning: technological and physical (paragraph 1(2)(a)(ii))
 - provide a programme of activities appropriate to the needs of pupils below compulsory school age (paragraph 1(2)(h)(ii))
 - ensure that classroom resources are of an adequate quality, quantity and range and are used effectively (paragraph 1(3)(f)).

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (standard 2) and must:

- provide pupils with a broad general knowledge of public institutions and services in England (paragraph 2(d)).

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

- ensure that child protection policy and procedures comply with requirements in DCSF guidance *Safeguarding children and safer recruitment in education (2007)* (paragraph 3(2)(b)).

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

- prior to the confirmation of the appointment of all staff ensure that appropriate checks have been carried out in line with requirements (paragraph 4(2)(a))
- ensure that an enhanced criminal records bureau check is carried out in respect of any member of staff appointed to a position at the school as required by regulations (paragraph 4(2)(b)).

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

- ensure that all classrooms do not compromise health or safety (paragraph 5(j))
- ensure there are sufficient washrooms for staff and pupils which take account of the Education (School Premises) Regulations 1999 (paragraph 5(k))
- provide appropriate facilities for pupils who are ill, in accordance with the Education (School Premises) Regulations 1999 (paragraph 5(l))
- ensure that classrooms and other parts of the school are maintained in a tidy, clean and hygienic state (paragraph 5(n))
- ensure that there is a satisfactory standard and adequate maintenance of decoration (paragraph 5(q))
- ensure that furniture and fittings are appropriately designed for the age and needs of all pupils registered at the school (paragraph 5(r))

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- ensure that there is appropriate flooring and that this is in good condition (paragraph 5(s)).

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

- in respect of any pupil who is registered at the school who is wholly or partly funded by a local authority, provide to that local authority an annual account of income and expenditure incurred by the school in respect of that pupil (paragraph 6(7)).

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of procedures for handling complaints (standard 7) and must:

- ensure that the school's complaints policy allows for parents to attend the panel hearing and, if they wish, to be accompanied (paragraph 7(h)).

School details

Name of school	OYY Lubavitch Girls' School
DCSF number	355/6028
Unique reference number	106004
Type of school	Independent Jewish school
Status	Independent
Date school opened	1980
Age range of pupils	3-16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 15 Girls: 74 Total: 89
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational need	Boys: 0 Girls: 1 Total: 1
Annual fees (day pupils)	£2490 - £4500
Address of school	Beis Menachem Park Lane Broughton Park Salford Lancashire M7 4JD
Telephone number	0161 795 0002
Fax number	0161 795 0002
Email address	oyylubavitch@btconnect.com
Headteacher	Mrs J Hanson
Proprietor	Rabbi D Hickson
Reporting inspector	Caroline Broomhead HMI
Dates of inspection	2–3 July 2008