

# Lubavitch House School (Senior Girls)

Independent school inspection report

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Reporting inspector	Fayge Levenberg

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## Purpose and scope of the inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Section 162A<sup>1</sup> of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005<sup>2</sup>, the purpose of which is 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

The Lubavitch House Senior Girls' School is a small independent secondary Jewish day school for girls aged 11 to 17. It serves the Orthodox Jewish community and caters specifically, but not exclusively, for families who follow Chabad Lubavitch customs and traditions. It is situated in the Borough of Hackney in London. It was established in 1962 and shares a building with a Nursery, primary school and a community centre. There are 105 students on roll, most from London and the surrounding areas including Luton, Brighton, Bournemouth, Wimbledon and Ealing. A small minority come from as far as Belarus and the United States of America. The school aims to inspire its students to become true and responsible representatives of Torah Judaism and Chabad Chassidism. It strives for high standards of work and behaviour both in Kodesh (Jewish Studies) and in its Chol (secular curriculum). There are 14 students with special educational needs and/or disabilities, two of whom have a statement of special educational needs, and a small minority of students have English as an additional language. The school was last inspected in March 2007 and was judged to provide a satisfactory quality of education.

## Evaluation of the school

The Lubavitch House Senior Girls' School provides a good quality of education that matches its stated aims well. The majority of students make good progress in both Kodesh studies and in the secular curriculum because the overall quality of teaching is good and the attitudes of the students are positive. The small class sizes permit much individual attention and this, too, impacts on progress. The provision for students' welfare, health and safety is good and safeguarding procedures are rigorous. Spiritual, moral, cultural and social development and behaviour are outstanding. The school now meets all the required regulations; it has addressed all of the issues raised at the last inspection and has made steady improvement.

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<sup>1</sup> [www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2002/ukpga\\_20020032\\_en\\_14#pt10-ch1-pb4-l1g162](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2002/ukpga_20020032_en_14#pt10-ch1-pb4-l1g162)

<sup>2</sup> [www.opsi.gov.uk/ACTS/acts2005/ukpga\\_20050018\\_en\\_15#sch8](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/ACTS/acts2005/ukpga_20050018_en_15#sch8)

## Quality of education

The overall quality of education is good. The quality of the curriculum and of teaching and assessment is good. This leads to good learning and progress. Small groups, a high level of individual attention and a strong emphasis on embedding the philosophy of Chabad Chassidism (Lubavich) through both good Kodesh and secular studies ensure that the students are well prepared for their future lives and further education and training. The school is very successful in guiding students to higher studies, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. All subjects taught are supported by written schemes of work.

The curriculum is divided into two distinctive strands: Kodesh and secular studies. Kodesh, which is taught in the mornings, covers a wide range of subjects, including Biblical and modern Hebrew, and educates students to an understanding of Jewish history, culture and religious practice. This is in addition to the Lubavitch teachings, of which one subject is taught from the Yiddish language text. The secular curriculum includes English, mathematics and science, which is now taught throughout the school, as well as history, geography, French, home economics, art, information and communication technology (ICT), religious studies and physical education. The school is constantly seeking ways to improve and, as a result of their deliberations, they have introduced vertical streaming for students in Years 9 to 12 for Biblical text lessons and set groups for mathematics in most year groups and for Biblical text lessons in Year 7. This ensures that standards are raised even higher.

In Years 10 and 11, all students are entered for public examinations and take up to seven GCSE subjects in addition to a newly introduced City and Guilds qualification in ICT. The school is justifiably proud of their successes in the GCSE examinations this past academic year, coming top in the Borough of Hackney with a 100% of students gaining at least five A\* to C grades in GCSE subjects including mathematics, English and a modern foreign language (French). The students also have the opportunity to take AS levels including religious studies and the current Year 12 are studying A levels in English, mathematics and religious studies.

Students with special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language are well supported by the newly appointed special educational needs coordinator. They make good progress. The personal, social, health and citizenship education now has a written scheme of work and serves the students exceptionally well. A new programme, written by the school, called 'I and the World' focuses on the students' responsibility and questions of identity and leads to their increasing self-confidence and self-esteem. During the week of the inspection there was a speaker from 'Drugline' talking to the students.

There are many varied enrichment opportunities that include evening clubs at different venues offering extra swimming classes, arts and crafts, dance, physical education and games. The annual school production led by Year 12, which includes all students, contributes to the preparation for their future by involving them in various ways, including marketing and producing brochures.

Most lessons observed were good and the others were satisfactory. This results in good progress for the majority of students. Relationships between staff and students are positive. Teaching is knowledgeable and systematic and with older students pays close attention to examination requirements. In the best lessons students achieve well through teaching that is lively, enthusiastic and delivered at a brisk pace. In these lessons there are opportunities for independent learning. This leads to well-focused, confident students, showing enjoyment and positive attitudes. In less successful lessons it is more teacher-directed and there is little challenge, and this results in students being too passive and less motivated. Resources are adequate.

All teachers regularly assess the students' work through various tests. Progress is monitored regularly, resulting in summaries of areas that need strengthening. This year has seen a newly introduced progress monitoring system that is being tested in some subjects across some year groups. It is now to be extended across the school but it is too soon to show reliable records of progress over time. The quality of teachers' planning and marking is not consistent across either strand of the curriculum or across year groups.

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

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the students is outstanding. Through the positive school ethos, students grow in self-confidence and develop extremely strong spiritual, moral and social values. Davening (prayers) take place twice daily. These are taken seriously by the students and made relevant by praying for people known to the students who are sick.

Moral teaching permeates every aspect of school life. Students learn to interact positively with each other. Year 12 students act as older sisters to Year 7 students. Students are happy and enjoy school; as one student said, 'I am proud and privileged to be a student here.' Attendance is good and behaviour is outstanding.

Within the Lubavitch ethos of outreach work, students are encouraged to meet people from all walks of life. Every opportunity is taken to educate students about their own and other cultures. The school welcomes visits from Jews and non-Jews and was recently visited by a local Muslim psychiatrist. There are good opportunities for students to learn about other cultures through religious education, art, history and geography. Students visit places of interest, such as the Houses of Parliament and law courts.

Students raise money for various charities; most recently they contributed to the Haiti fund via the Chabad international network Chabad .org. Students are encouraged to take responsibility; they organise youth groups and teach in Sunday morning religious classes. There is a school council at which the students are given the opportunity to voice their concerns or suggestions for improvement. They appreciate this and feel that they are listened to and supported.

## Welfare, health and safety of the pupils

The provision for students' welfare and safety is good. Students are encouraged to keep healthy through the teaching of science and through physical education and swimming lessons. The 'lunch and learn' club provides healthy food and students are reminded to bring healthy lunches to school. Staff are vigilant in their supervision of the students and rigorously monitor any accidents or incidents. The impact of the school's efforts on the students is that they feel safe. In discussion, the students are clear that they have someone to turn to should the need arise. Arrangements for pupils from overseas are robust and under the auspices of the Lubavitch network.

The school has ensured that all the necessary policies are in place and implemented to meet the regulations. All policies are up to date and the fire risk assessment is in place. The child protection policy reflects current guidance and all staff are now suitably trained. The admission and attendance registers are now correctly completed in accordance with the Education Regulations 2006. The school fulfils its statutory duties under the Disability and Discrimination Act 2002.

## Suitability of the proprietor and staff

Procedures for staff checks with the Criminal Records Bureau are carried out systematically. Records are up to date and kept securely on a single central record. Character references are now taken for all new appointments and checks have been made on all staff to confirm medical fitness.

## School's premises and accommodation

The premises and accommodation provide satisfactory facilities for safe and effective learning. Teaching rooms are effectively lit and satisfactorily ventilated. Rooms are adequate for the numbers of students and generally conducive to learning. There is a library, an art room, and a room used for food technology. There is a large hall that is used for assemblies, physical education and performances. The playground provides adequate space for outdoor play. The indoor flooring has been replaced since the last inspection and the school is continuously renovating the building in accordance with its development plan.

## Provision of information for parents, carers and others

The school has now ensured that it complies fully with the regulations requiring it to provide information for parents and carers. They are given regular information about their children's progress, although not all written reports explain fully what students can do or set targets for development. Parents' responses to the inspection

questionnaires show that they are very positive about the quality of education their children receive.

## Procedures for handling complaints

The school's complaints procedures are clear and now comply fully with the regulations.

## Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school meets all of the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2003.

## What the school could do to improve further

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

- Schemes of work should be further developed, in all subjects.
- Develop assessment procedures so that each student's progress can be monitored systematically over time.

Inspection judgement recording form

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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The quality of boarding provision *(leave blank if not applicable)*

Evaluation of boarding provision				
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## School details

Name of school	Lubavitch House School (Senior Girls)		
DCSF number	204/6411		
Unique reference number (URN)	133616		
Type of school	Secondary day school		
Status	Independent		
Date school opened	1962		
Age range of pupils	11–17		
Gender of pupils	Girls		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 0	Girls: 105	Total: 105
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational need	Boys: 0	Girls: 2	Total: 2
Annual fees (day pupils)	£3,600		
Address of school	Lubavitch House School (Senior Girls)		
Telephone number	020 8800 0022		
Fax number	020 8809 7324		
Email address	lsgs@hotmail.co.uk		
Headteacher	Rabbi S Lew/Mrs H Freeman		
Proprietor	Lubavitch UK		
Reporting inspector	Mrs Fayge Levenberg		
Dates of inspection	16–17 February 2010		