

Organisation name	Alpadia by Kaplan, head office London
Inspection date	14 July 2023
Current accreditation status	Accredited
Reason for spot check	Signalled: follow up on Points to be addressed

Recommendation

We recommend continued accreditation. The next inspection falls due in 2026; there are no grounds for bringing this forward.

Changes to the summary statement

The need for improvement in teaching can now be removed.

New summary statement

The British Council inspected and accredited Alpadia by Kaplan in August 2022 and July 2023. The Accreditation Scheme assesses the standards of management, resources and premises, teaching, welfare, and safeguarding under 18s and accredits organisations which meet the overall standard in each area inspected (see www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation for details).

This private language school offers residential courses in general English for under 18s.

Strengths were noted in the areas of strategic and quality management, premises and facilities, care of students, leisure opportunities and safeguarding under 18s.

The inspection report stated that the organisation met the standards of the Scheme.

Updated summary inspection findings

Teaching and learning

The provision meets the section standard. The academic team has an appropriate profile, and academic management mostly offer good support to teaching and learning. Course design, and academic administration are satisfactory. The teaching observed met the requirements of the Scheme.

Declaration of legal and regulatory compliance

The items sampled were satisfactory.

Organisation profile

Inspection history	Dates/details
First inspection	2016
Last full inspection	2022
Subsequent spot check(s) (if applicable)	N/a
Subsequent supplementary check(s) (if applicable)	N/a
Subsequent interim visit(s) (if applicable)	N/a
Other related non-accredited activities (in brief) at this centre	N/a
Other related accredited schools/centres/affiliates	Kaplan International Languages schools around the UK
Other related non-accredited schools/centres/affiliates	Alpadia Europe

Student and staff profile	At inspection	In peak week: July
Total ELT/ESOL student numbers (FT + PT)	648	711
Minimum age (including closed group or vacation)	10 (13 at London)	10 (13 at London)
Typical age range	10–17 (13–17 at London)	10–17 (13–17 at London)
Typical length of stay	2 weeks	2 weeks
Predominant nationalities	French, Spanish, Swiss, German, Italian	French, Spanish, Swiss, German, Italian

Total number of teachers on eligible ELT courses	35	44
Total number of managers including academic	4	4
Total number of administrative/ancillary staff	99	105

Premises profile

Address of main site	Palace House, 3 Cathedral Street, London SE1 9DE (head office)
Additional sites in use	Goldsmiths University of London, 8 Lewisham Way, New Cross, London SE14 6NW Roedean School, Roedean Way, Brighton BN2 5RQ Woldingham School, Marden Park, Woldingham CR3 7YA
Additional sites not in use	N/a
Sites inspected	Goldsmiths University of London

Introduction

Background

Alpadia by Kaplan was inspected and reaccredited in August 2022. This was a spot check to follow up on weaknesses in teaching from that inspection.

Preparation

The spot check was carried out by one inspector, who had been involved in the previous inspection in 2022. The inspector contacted the centre to check if there were any dates which would not be suitable and when key staff would be present. The Accreditation Unit sent the inspector relevant documents. The inspector looked at the Alpadia website.

Programme and persons present

The inspector arrived at 8.45 and left at 13.30. He had meetings with the London area manager, centre manager and director of studies. Separate focus group meetings were held with a group of teachers, and students. In addition, the inspector observed 10 of the 12 teachers working during the week of the inspection. Upon arrival, the inspector requested a range of documents, all of which were forthcoming. At the end of the visit, a short feedback session was provided.

Findings

Findings are reported in the following section and in the Action taken on points to be addressed.

Teaching and learning

Since the 2022 inspection, there has been a full and thorough review of the Alpadia curriculum, which has led to the introduction of a new syllabus. The new syllabus and course has been compiled leveraging Kaplan's own K+ Teens coursebook content, functional language and project work, and the previous coursebooks have been withdrawn. Academic staff have received training in the new syllabus, as well as teaching strategies related to the 2022 report's points to be addressed in the area of teaching.

Teaching: classroom observation	Met
T23 Teachers demonstrate sound knowledge and awareness of the use of English and the linguistic systems underlying it, and provide appropriate models of both spoken and written English.	Met
T24 The content of the lessons shows that the course objectives, the learning needs and cultural backgrounds of the students have been taken into account.	Met
T25 Lessons lead to relevant learning outcomes, made known to students and achieved through a coherent sequence of activities.	Not met
T26 Teaching techniques are appropriate to the focus of the lesson and to the needs of the group and individual learners.	Met
T27 Teachers promote learning by the effective management of the classroom environment and resources.	Met
T28 Students receive appropriate and timely feedback on their performance during the lesson.	Met
T29 Lessons include activities to evaluate whether learning is taking place.	Met
T30 Teachers demonstrate the ability to engage students and create a positive learning atmosphere.	Met

Comments

T23 In the majority of segments, language was clearly dealt with by teachers. Explanations, models and examples were appropriate.

T24 Most plans included class profiles which sufficiently identified students' learning needs. In general, topics and materials were appropriate for the students' profiles and for the course objectives.

T25 There was very little evidence of appropriate learning outcomes being shared with students. In most cases, outcomes were vague and represented student activity or teaching aims rather than the anticipated results of learning.

T26 In most segments observed, a range of techniques was used with confidence. There were varied questioning techniques and good use of elicitation and nomination.

T27 There was some very effective use of audio-visual technology, including use of interactive whiteboards. In addition, mini-whiteboards were used to good effect. Some classes included well prepared materials, and in stronger segments, teachers used the students as a resource through games and competitions.

T28 Overall monitoring and feedback was effective. There were good examples of a range of correction techniques, including delayed, peer and self-correction. In stronger segments appropriate feedback and correction generated a highly responsive learning environment.

T29 All lessons included opportunities to review work covered in previous lessons. In the stronger segments observed, there was an explicit progression from what had been learned previously to the work that was taking place in class.

T30 Overall the learning environment was student centred, and teachers adopted a warm, friendly approach, ensuring a positive learning environment.

Classroom observation summary

The teaching observed met the requirements of the Scheme and ranged from good to unsatisfactory against the criteria, with the majority being satisfactory. Teachers demonstrated grammatical awareness and generally provided appropriate models through their own speech and writing. In many cases, lessons had been carefully planned with learners' needs and course objectives in mind, although appropriate learning outcomes were not clearly stated nor shared with students. The techniques used were for the most part appropriate to the age range, and classroom resources were managed competently. There was an effective focus on the evaluation of learning and feedback to learners. Overall, teachers created an atmosphere conducive to learning.

Action taken on points to be addressed

Points from the previous full inspection and/or subsequent spot checks or interim visits with comments (in bold) to indicate how far these have been addressed. Only points reviewed during this spot check are included here. Any points outstanding will be checked at the next full inspection.

Premises and resources

P7 There were insufficient learning resources available for students resulting in an over reliance on photocopied materials.

Addressed. The redesigned course used the K+ teen coursebook and student portfolios, reducing the reliance on photocopied materials.

Teaching and learning

T13 No course outlines are made available to students.

Partially addressed. While course outlines are on the online student portal, no students or teachers interviewed stated that students had seen the outline for their course.

T17 Placement testing procedures do not reliably result in students being placed in homogenous groupings according to English level.

Partially addressed. While a new placement test has been introduced, students and teachers both said that some students had been placed in the wrong level and were unable to change classes due to high student numbers in all classes.

T25 In most cases, lesson plans included teaching aims or examples of student activities rather than learning outcomes. Lesson aims were not written as learning outcomes and were not shared with students. There was often no clear link between the objectives of the lesson and the activities taking place.

Remains not met; see comment above.

T28 Overall monitoring and feedback was not effective. There were frequent missed opportunities for correction.

Addressed; see comment above.

T29 There was little evidence of the checking of the understanding of the meaning, form or pronunciation of language, and very few opportunities for students to check their progress in terms of the learning aims.

Addressed; see comment above.

Legal and regulatory compliance

D1 Sampling identified the following issue: the course syllabus is heavily dependent on photocopies from coursebooks, and in some cases copying exceeds the limits set by the relevant authority.

Addressed. The redesigned course used the K+ teen coursebook and student portfolios, meaning that levels of photocopying are much reduced and do not exceed the limits set by the relevant authority.

Conclusions

The school has addressed the weaknesses identified in the areas of teaching and legal and regulatory compliance. However, while progress has been made in addressing the weaknesses in course design and learner management, they have not yet been fully resolved.
