Arolygiaeth Gofal Cymru
Care Inspectorate Wales

Inspection Report

Beech Cottage

1-4 Beech Terrace, Abercwmboi, Aberdare, CF44 6AW

01443 479907

The inspection visit took place on 21/10/2026

Service Information:

Operated by:	Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council Adults and Children's Services
Care Type:	Care Home Service Adults Without Nursing
Provision for:	Care and support for people requiring short-breaks or respite care, Care and support for people with a learning disability
Registered places:	4
Main language(s):	English
Promotion of Welsh language and culture:	The provider makes an effort to promote the use of the Welsh language and culture or is working towards a bilingual service.

Ratings:

Well-being	Good
Care & Support	Good
Environment	Good
Leadership & Management	Good

Summary:

Beech Cottage is a respite service for adults with a learning disability and associated needs. It is located within a residential area in Abercwmboi, near Aberdare.

Well-being is good because people are supported to make choices, maintain independence and achieve outcomes which are important to them. Good personal planning, effective communication support, and positive risk-taking help people make the most of their respite stays. Care and support is good because people receive personalised care from skilled care staff who understand their needs and preferences. Strong partnership working and person-centred approaches help keep people safe and well. The environment is good because people stay in a comfortable, accessible and well-maintained setting which promotes wellbeing, independence and inclusion. Leadership and management is good because the service is well led and benefits from strong governance arrangements. Effective oversight, a positive learning culture and a stable, skilled staff team support continuous improvement and positive outcomes for people.

Findings:

Well-being — Good

Well-being is good because people receive personalised support which promotes choice, independence and positive outcomes. People receive person-centred support based on personal plans which describe their needs, preferences, communication methods and aspirations. Communication passports help care staff maximise choice and participation, while support focuses on achieving personal outcomes. Detailed behaviour support plans, healthcare guidance and risk assessments enable people, including those with more complex needs, to participate safely in activities and experiences. Families contribute to reviews and planning, helping support remain individual and responsive.

People are protected by care staff who understand safeguarding responsibilities and know how to report concerns appropriately. Risk assessments, behaviour support plans and incident monitoring systems help identify and reduce risks while respecting people's rights and freedoms. Strong multidisciplinary working and effective monitoring of health needs support people's safety and wellbeing. Care staff know people well and use communication guidance and observation to help protect people who may be unable to raise concerns themselves.

People are supported to maintain relationships and connections which are important to them. Personal profiles help care staff understand people's histories, interests and preferences, enabling respectful and meaningful support. Community activities and suitable transport help people participate in opportunities they enjoy. Communication support enables people to express their wishes and choices as far as they can, while respite stays provide valuable social opportunities for people and important breaks for families from caring responsibilities.

People benefit from an environment which is accessible, comfortable and suited to their needs. The home supports people with a range of support needs, with specialist equipment available where required. Adaptations, environmental risk assessments and safety arrangements promote independence while maintaining safety. Outdoor spaces and transport provision support wellbeing and community access. The building is clean, maintained and fit for purpose, enabling the service to provide effective respite care and positive outcomes for people.

Care & Support — Good

Care and support is good because people receive personalised, safe and effective support which reflects their individual needs and preferences. People receive support based on individual personal plans and detailed care files. Reviews take place before each respite stay, helping ensure information remains current. Families are actively involved in planning and reviewing support, and care staff confirm they have read and understood records before providing care. Communication passports, behaviour support plans and multidisciplinary involvement help ensure support is consistent and person-centred. Feedback from families is highly positive, with one relative telling us, "*My loved one is treated with the utmost dignity and care*", while another said, "*It's the best place for respite, the care is 100%.*" Families also describe the significant positive impact of the service, commenting, "*Beech Cottage has been a lifeline for myself*" and "*For the first time we are able to do some normal things as husband and wife*."

People are supported within a positive culture where safety and wellbeing are promoted. Care staff are confident in recognising and raising concerns and understand their responsibilities to keep people safe. Effective communication systems, detailed support plans and shared information help ensure risks are managed consistently. Positive behaviour approaches focus on understanding people's needs, reducing distress and promoting wellbeing. Families and professionals are involved when significant decisions are made, and any restrictive practices are monitored and reviewed appropriately.

People benefit from appropriate medicines management arrangements. Medicines are stored securely, records are completed accurately and effective systems support the safe transfer of medicines during respite stays. Pre-stay discussions with families help ensure medication information remains current. Competency assessments are based on observation of practice, providing assurance care staff can administer medicines safely. Appropriate arrangements are in place for controlled drugs and PRN ‘as needed’ medicines where required.

People are supported in a clean and hygienic environment which promotes their health and wellbeing. Care staff are up to date with infection prevention and control training and understand safe working practices. Suitable arrangements are in place for food hygiene, laundry and waste management, and necessary supplies are readily available throughout the service. Cleaning forms part of daily routines and is monitored through regular records.

Environment — Good

The environment is good because people stay in a safe, accessible and well-maintained service which supports their individual needs, independence and wellbeing. The service is spacious, accessible and suitable for people with a range of support needs. Bedrooms are well equipped, with specialist equipment such as ceiling tracking hoists, profiling beds and accessible en-suite facilities available where required. The service adapts the environment in response to individual needs, helping people remain safe and comfortable during their stay. Accessible bathing, toileting and communal facilities support people to move around the home safely and with dignity. The kitchen and dining area promote participation and social interaction, while comfortable communal areas, an activity room and personalised displays help create a welcoming and homely atmosphere.

People benefit from an environment which promotes wellbeing, privacy and inclusion. Outdoor spaces provide opportunities for relaxation, recreation and sensory experiences, and people have access to indoor private areas when they wish to spend time alone or hold private conversations. The environment supports both social engagement and individual choice, helping people make the most of their respite experience.

People are protected by effective environmental safety arrangements. Storage areas are well managed, hazardous substances are stored securely, and personal information is kept in locked areas. Good security measures are in place throughout the building, including secure access arrangements and window restrictors where required. Fire safety systems, drills and maintenance arrangements are well managed, helping ensure people remain safe.

People benefit from a service which maintains the environment effectively. Comprehensive health and safety checks are completed across the premises, including monitoring of fire safety systems, water safety, electrical installations, lifting equipment and other key areas. Maintenance arrangements are supported by both the Local Authority Corporate Estates team and a dedicated maintenance person, helping ensure repairs and upkeep are addressed promptly. Dedicated staff facilities are also available, supporting care staff to provide effective care and support.

Leadership & Management — Good

Leadership and management is good because people benefit from effective leadership, appropriate governance arrangements and a stable workforce which supports positive outcomes. The service is well managed and has effective systems to monitor the quality and safety of care. Detailed oversight is provided through regular visits, audits and monitoring activities covering key areas including safeguarding, health and safety, care records, medication and service quality. Reports identify actions, timescales and responsibilities, helping drive continuous improvement. Team meetings are used well to reinforce good practice and encourage reflection. Learning extends beyond mandatory training through scenarios and practical exercises, including innovative work to develop care staff understanding of behaviour support and communication. Effective communication systems help ensure information is shared appropriately and actions are followed up. Investment has been made in resources which enhance people's experiences, including sensory equipment and opportunities for outdoor activities. Improved staffing stability has contributed to more consistent support and positive outcomes for people.

People benefit from a stable, skilled and well-supported workforce. Staffing arrangements are based on people's assessed needs, and contingency arrangements help ensure support remains available when required. Care staff complete training relevant to the needs of people using the service and demonstrate a strong understanding of individual needs, communication methods and support strategies. Induction arrangements prepare new staff well for their role, with one member of staff telling us, "*I felt very well prepared before starting".* Care staff spoke positively about leadership and support, describing managers as approachable, knowledgeable and available. One member of staff told us, "*My manager is great at her job, very knowledgeable and cares about our individuals and our staff*", while another said, "*Our service works well due to having a good manager and a great team*." Staff morale is positive and feedback consistently highlights a strong team culture, with one care staff summarising this by saying, "*Everyone works as a team here*."

Areas identified for improvement

Where we identify **Areas for Improvement** but we have not found outcomes for people to be at immediate or significant risk, we discuss these with the provider. We expect the provider to take action and we will follow this up at the next inspection.

Where we find outcomes for people **require significant improvement** and/or there is risk to people's well-being we identify areas for **Priority Action**. In these circumstances we issue a Priority Action Notice(s) to the Provider, and they must take immediate steps to make improvements. We will inspect again within six months to check improvements have been made and outcomes for people have improved.

CIW has no areas for improvement identified following this inspection.

CIW has not issued any Priority action notices following this inspection.

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