



## 1st Grade Care (Gwent)



1st Grade Care Ltd, Unit 2 Charterhouse Links Business Park, Fortran Road, Cardiff, CF3 0LT



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[www.1stgradecare.co.uk](http://www.1stgradecare.co.uk)

Date(s) of inspection visit(s):

15/07/2025, 25/07/2025

### Service Information:

Operated by:	1st Grade Care Ltd
Care Type:	Domiciliary Support Service
Provision for:	Supported Living
Registered places:	0
Main language(s):	English
Promotion of Welsh language and culture:	The service provider anticipates, identifies, and meets the Welsh language and culture needs of people.

## Ratings:



Well-being

**Good**



Care & Support

**Good**



Leadership & Management

**Good**

## Summary:

1<sup>st</sup> Grade Care Ltd (Gwent) provides domiciliary or homecare support services to people in the regional partnership area of Gwent. The service mainly focusses on the Newport area.

Well-being outcomes for people are good because care staff are professional, well-trained and support people with kindness, dignity and respect.

Care and support is good because there is increasing consistency in the team with care staff knowing people well and how to keep them safe. Personal plans are individualised, outcome focussed and co-produced between the service, people and their representatives.

Leadership and management is good as people are placed at the heart of the service by leaders who are visible role models. The service provider's oversight and governance arrangements foster a strong positive culture that is supportive, inclusive and respectful. The Responsible Individual continues to look for innovative ways to improve the service for the benefit of people.

## Findings:



### Well-being

Good

People have a strong voice throughout the service and lead in their support arrangements. The provider places great importance on consulting people on the service they receive. This is a central theme of their quality assurance processes. People and if appropriate relatives are a key part of the care planning and review processes. People told us they “*feel involved*” and “*in control*” of the care they receive. The Statement of Purpose (SoP) and Guide to Service are clear, concise and contain relevant information about the service. They are also available to people in the Welsh language. People can be assured any concerns, compliments or complaints are acted upon and supported by appropriate policies and procedures.

People speak positively about the service and the care and support they receive as they have highly effective working relationships with care staff. This was evident throughout the shadowing calls we completed as part of the inspection. Care workers followed personal plans, explaining what they were doing and checking if it was okay to do so. Relationships are trusted, respectful and with good humour. Comments from people include “*I really look forward to X coming to see me, they are wonderful*” and “*they go over and above, they really care about me*”. We saw care workers always checked if people needed anything further during calls ensuring people were comfortable and happy.

People are empowered through the support of trained, skilled and motivated care staff to achieve their self-directed outcomes. Care workers have access to good quality training and regular supervision to ensure they continue to be equipped to undertake their roles. Communication between the office and community-based staff is consistently good, with managers always looking for ways for this to improve. Overall, people benefit from consistency of staff with low staff turnover. Care workers are motivated to make a positive difference to the lives of people they support.

People live healthily and safely with control over their lives. Care staff are recruited safely and robust background checks completed prior to employment starting. All new staff engage in a period of induction and shadowing with experienced colleagues. Care staff receive training in protecting vulnerable adults and the service provider has comprehensive policies and procedures in place to support this. Staff have good knowledge of their responsibilities regarding safeguarding people and know how to report any concerns they may have. People’s personal plans are strength based and outline how staff should support people to achieve their well-being outcomes. People and if appropriate their relatives are integral in the development and review of personal plans.



People's personal plans outline how staff should support them to achieve their well-being outcomes. Personal plans are easy to read and provide care workers with clear information to enable them to consistently provide good quality care. Care planning information is easily available to care workers and includes people's preferences, routines, and beliefs. People's interests, history and important relationships are reflected well in personal plans. They are co-produced between people, their representatives, relevant professionals, and the service provider.

The provider has recently introduced an innovative secure application (App) that is used by both staff and people using the service. The application enables staff to access a range of job-related information. It also enables people who use the service to access key service information such as the biographies of care workers. This is a useful way of matching staff with people. The service provider is keen to shortly move fully to a secure paperless system.

People experience care and support that is dignified and respectful, and they have meaningful interactions with staff. We saw people being skilfully supported by well-trained staff. People benefit from a consistent staff team with a detailed understanding of their individual needs and preferences. Staff turnover is low, and staff are allocated calls that suit their availability. Generally, people have choice of care workers to ensure compatibility. We shadowed care workers on several visits and found they were professional, kind and knew people very well. Overall people are positive on the care they receive telling us "*Care workers are kind and really care about me*" and "*They always have time for me*". Relatives are also generally positive about the service being provided.

People feel safe, knowing that staff understand how to manage and reduce risks in keeping them as safe as possible. Overall, we saw clear and well-informed risk assessments that are reviewed regularly, although some required updating. Care workers are well trained and act in accordance with their safeguarding responsibilities. They are also supported by thorough policies and procedures, such as whistleblowing and safeguarding. Staff have easy access to policies and procedures, of which are also discussed within team meetings.

People receive medication in a safe, person-centred way. We saw well-informed personal plans regarding medication. These are supported by clear and consistent medication management protocols. Medication is only administered by trained staff that have their competencies checked by senior staff. We saw staff administering medication in a safe manner tailored to the preference of the individual.



## Leadership & Management

Good

The service provider's oversight and governance arrangements foster a very strong positive culture that is supportive, inclusive and respectful. People are placed at the heart of the service with quality assurance processes focusing on their experience of receiving care. Leaders are visible role models as they guide the strategic direction of the service. The accessibility of the Responsible Individual (RI), Deputy Manager and senior staff was extensive. This ensures people have confidence in the service and staff feel well-supported. Staff wellbeing is also of paramount importance to the leadership and management team. Staff said, "*We have confidence in the management team*". Staff have regular communication and extensive support from managers. This is through regular team (virtual and in person) and supervision meetings. Staff are encouraged to drop into the office along with people using the service. The provider places great focus on the 1<sup>st</sup> Grade Family approach, where 'care, teamwork and kindness' come first. This was clear throughout the inspection.

The RI continues to look for creative ways to improve the service. They have recently introduced coffee and cake mornings for people using the service. This enables people and/ or their relatives to get to know the management team in a relaxed environment, raising any issues on the care they receive. The RI uses this information to continually improve the service and to inform quality assurance processes. This includes the detailed six-monthly quality of care reports.

The service provider has strict selection and vetting processes for recruiting staff to ensure all staff are qualified and trustworthy. We saw all staff undergo routine and regular checks to ensure they remain suitably fit to work in the service and are appropriately registered with professional bodies. We found staff human resource files to be a very high standard and well organised with all the appropriate information made easily available for us to view. We saw staff files referenced ongoing contractual discussions offering domiciliary care workers on non-guaranteed hours contracts the choice of alternative contractual arrangements.

People achieve their personal outcomes because the service provider makes sure there are enough suitably qualified and trained staff to deliver quality care and support. There is a very stable staff team with low turnover ensuring people have consistency and are able to develop trusting relationships. The provider regularly checks and adjusts the staffing levels and skills mix to keep up with the changing needs of the people they support. Management audits consistently monitor staffing, missed calls and timekeeping in relation to agreed call-times. Staff training is up to date, relevant and based on the needs of people being supported.

## 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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