

PARENTS' GUIDE TO THE SOUTH EASTERN TRUST AND ASSOCIATED SURE STARTS INFANT FEEDING POLICY

AIMS

We support the right of all parents to make informed choices about feeding and caring for their baby. We believe breastfeeding is the healthiest way to feed your baby and we recognise the important benefits which breastfeeding provides for both you and your child. We therefore encourage you to breastfeed your baby.

WAYS IN WHICH WE WILL HELP YOU FEED AND CARE FOR YOUR BABY

- ❖ All staff have been specially trained to help you feed and care for your baby.
- ❖ During pregnancy, you will have the opportunity to have conversations with health professionals about feeding and caring for your baby.
- ❖ Babies feel safe, secure and learn to feed when mum is close by. To support this, we will encourage skin contact immediately after birth and beyond, as a way to comfort and care for your baby.
- ❖ Staff will support you with learning to feed your baby and recognizing when baby is feeding effectively.
- ❖ Mums who breastfeed will be shown how to hand express their milk.
- ❖ Mums who bottle feed will be encouraged to hold their baby close during feeds and offer the majority of feeds themselves, to help enhance the mother-baby relationship.
- ❖ All parents will be supported to understand a newborn baby's needs, including encouraging frequent touch, sensitive verbal and visual communication, keeping baby close, responding to baby's needs for food and comfort and safe sleeping practices.
- ❖ We recommend that when learning to breastfeed, it is useful to avoid using teats and dummies.
- ❖ We recommend exclusive breastfeeding for 6 months as it leads to the best outcomes for babies. Giving formula milk to breastfed infants may lead to health problems and lower your milk supply. If you decide to give some formula we will encourage you to breastfeed as much as possible and will let you know how to keep up your milk supply.
- ❖ We will help you to recognise when your baby is ready for solid foods (normally at around 6 months), and explain how these can be introduced.
- ❖ We welcome breastfeeding in all areas of our premises. If you would prefer somewhere private, please ask a member of staff.
- ❖ We will provide information about who you can contact for extra help and support, or who can help if you have a problem.