

## A Parents' Guide to the Community Infant Feeding Guidance

We support the right of all parents to make informed choices about infant feeding. All our staff will support you in your decisions. We believe that 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 for as long as possible.

### **Ways in which we will help mothers to breastfeed successfully in the community**

All members of the Health Visiting / Family Nurse Partnership service have been specially trained to help you breastfeed your baby.

During your pregnancy, you will be able to discuss breastfeeding individually with a Midwife or a Health Visitor who will answer any questions you may have. A Midwife will be available to explain how to put your baby to the breast and to help you with feeds in the early days. A member of the Health Visiting Team will provide support later on. You are also invited to attend our breastfeeding groups antenatally for information and support.

We recommend that you hold your baby against your skin as soon as possible after birth and keep your baby near you whenever you can, so that you can get to know each other.

We will show you how to express your breastmilk and give you some written information about this. We will give you a copy of the 'Off to the Best Start' leaflet if you have not already received one. We will complete a breastfeeding assessment at the birth visit and develop a plan of care with you.

We will show you the signs that your baby is getting enough milk and give you information about caring your baby at night. We will encourage you to feed your baby whenever your baby seems to be hungry. We will explain feeding cues and that breastfeeding can also be used to calm and comfort your baby.

We recommend that you avoid using bottles, dummies and nipple shields while your baby is learning to breastfeed. This is because they can make it more difficult for your baby to learn to breastfeed successfully and for you to establish a good milk supply.

Most babies do not need to be given anything other than breastmilk until they are six months old. If for some reason your baby needs some other food or drink before this, the reason will be fully explained to you.

We will help you recognise when your baby is ready for other foods (normally around six months) and explain how these can be introduced.

We welcome breastfeeding in all areas of our premises. We will give you information to help you breastfeed when you are out and about.

We will inform you of who you can contact if you need extra help and support with breastfeeding, or who can help if you have a problem. We will inform you about breastfeeding groups available in your local area.

This is your guide to the community infant feeding guidance. If you wish to see the full policy it can be accessed on [www.cwp.nhs.uk](http://www.cwp.nhs.uk) or please ask a member of staff for a copy.