



Whitegate

Nursery School Early Years Care Children's Centre

BREASTFEEDING POLICY

Working together to make a real and lasting difference...

Our Mission Statement

Whitegate Children's Centre strives to provide a happy, caring and understanding environment, where each individual is valued and is able to develop to their full potential within the Early Years Foundation Stage

We aim to provide an integrated service which involves and supports parents in the care and education of their children. For very young children, care and education are inseparable.

Principles

- Whitegate Children's Centre believes that breastfeeding is the healthiest way for a mother to feed her baby, giving the best start to a child's life whilst recognising the health benefits known to exist for both mother and child.
- All mothers have the right to make a fully informed choice on how to feed and care for baby. The provision of clear and impartial information to all mothers at an appropriate time is therefore essential.
- Whitegate Children's Centre will not discriminate against any woman in her chosen method of infant feeding and will fully support her when she has made that choice.
- This Policy is designed to ensure good evidence-based practice and not to dictate the choice of the mother.

Aims

- To ensure the health benefits of breastfeeding compared with formula feeding are discussed with all women and their families, as appropriate, so that they can make an informed choice about how they will feed their babies.
- To create a culture where more women choose to breastfeed their babies and all women are given sufficient information to support and enable them to breastfeed for six months and then as part of their infant diet for as long as they both wish.
- To enable all Whitegate Children's Centre representatives who have contact with breastfeeding women to be sensitive to their needs through specialized training in all aspects of breastfeeding management.
- To encourage liaison with other health care providers and voluntary breastfeeding support groups to establish a seamless service and promote the development of a breastfeeding culture throughout the local community.

In support of this policy

- It is crucial that all staff adhere to this policy to avoid conflicting advice any deviation from the policy must be justified and recorded.
- It is the responsibility of all Whitegate Children's Centre representatives to consult with health professionals should any concerns arise about the breastfeeding process. The policy and protocols will be reviewed annually.

Communicating the breastfeeding policy

- This policy is to be communicated to all Whitegate Children Centre representatives who have any contact with pregnant women and mothers. This policy will be displayed in all Centres and staff and mothers should have easy access to it.
- On Induction, all new staff will be made aware of the policy and, if relevant, receive a copy of it.

Training Children's Centre representatives

- Midwives, Health Visitors and 'significant others' have the primary responsibility for supporting breastfeeding women and helping them overcome related problems
- All professional, clerical and voluntary staff who have contact with pregnant women and mothers will receive training in breastfeeding management at a level appropriate to their needs.
- New staff will receive training within six months of taking up their posts.
- Study updates will be provided to ensure good practice is maintained.

Informing pregnant women on benefits of breastfeeding

- Every effort must be made to ensure that all pregnant women are aware of the benefits of breast feeding.
- All pregnant women should be given an opportunity to discuss infant feeding on a one-to-one basis, with an appropriately trained person.
- The physiological basis of breastfeeding should be clearly and simply explained to all pregnant women, together with some of the common experiences they may encounter. The aim should be to improve a woman's confidence in her ability to breastfeed.
- All mothers should be informed of the importance of skin-to-skin contact as soon after birth as possible. Professionals should encourage mothers to continue skin-to-skin contact to promote the establishment and continuation of breastfeeding. All materials and teachings should reflect the best evidence based practices.
- Parents who have made a fully informed choice to feed their babies artificially should be given the appropriate support on a one-to one basis.

Supporting the establishment and maintenance of lactation

- Appropriately trained staff will check on the progress of breastfeeding at each contact and will endeavour to offer mothers the support necessary to acquire the skills of positioning and attachment and hand expression of milk.
- Exclusive baby-led feeding should be encouraged.
- The benefits of skin-to-skin contact and keeping baby near the mother will be discussed, and if the mother is unable to breastfeed, continued support should be offered.
- Whitegate Children's Centre representatives should not recommend the use of artificial teats or dummies during the establishment of breastfeeding, due to the possible detrimental effect on breastfeeding.

Supporting exclusive breastfeeding

- Thriving/healthy babies do not need water or artificial feeds. Parents who choose to supplement their baby's breast milk with formula milk should be made aware of the health implications and of the impact supplementation may have on breastfeeding to allow them to make a fully informed choice.
- All mothers should be encouraged to breastfeed exclusively for at least the first six months and to continue to breast feed as the weaning diet becomes increasingly varied to twelve months and beyond.

Providing a welcome for breastfeeding families

- Breastfeeding will be regarded as the normal way to feed babies and young children. Mothers will be enabled and supported to feed their infants in all Whitegate Children's Centre premises.
- We shall endeavour to provide comfortable facilities for mothers who prefer privacy.

Encouraging community support for breastfeeding

- Whitegate Children's Centre will support coordination between individual centres and Voluntary Support Groups whilst recognising that Health Care Providers have their own responsibility to promote breastfeeding.
- The contact details of Community Midwives, Health Visitors and Voluntary Breastfeeding Counsellors will be issued to all mothers and will be routinely displayed in all public areas.
- Breastfeeding Support Groups will be invited to contribute to the further development of the Breastfeeding Policy and work collaboratively to support our breastfeeding initiatives.
- All Whitegate Children's Centre employees should use their influence wherever and whenever possible to encourage a breastfeeding culture in the local community.
- Opportunities to influence or take part in educational programmes in schools should be explored and encouraged

Support for mothers returning to work

- As a Children Centre, we should offer facilities for mothers who wish to breastfeed their babies on the premises by offering them a room to breastfeed in privacy.
- Whitegate Children's Centre should continue to offer support for mothers who continue to breastfeed their babies on return to work, with facilities to store breast milk in a suitable refrigerator.