



# Parents' Guide to the Infant Feeding Policy

**We support the right of all parents to make informed decisions about infant feeding and will support you in your decisions. We believe that breastfeeding\* is the healthiest way to feed your baby and provides important benefits for you and your child. We therefore encourage you to breastfeed your baby.**

**How we will help mothers and birthing parents:**

## 1. In Pregnancy we will:

- Provide you with information about our Health Visiting and Family Hub services
- Offer you a conversation about feeding your baby, including an opportunity to discuss any previous feeding challenges
- Share with you how to recognise and respond to your baby's needs and the importance of developing a positive relationship with your baby including how this supports their brain developing
- Make you aware of antenatal classes that are available and the ways you can access support for caring for your new baby
- Offer opportunities to listen to and involve parents in the design of our services

## 2. After your Baby's Birth we will:

- Offer early postnatal support
- Provide a welcoming atmosphere in all our clinics and Family Hubs
- Carry out feeding assessments at our routine contacts to reassure you or provide additional support for any difficulties, and to support parent-baby wellbeing
- Work with you to develop a personal feeding plan to address any difficulties and help you adjust following any challenges you have experienced
- Advise how to access a range of infant feeding support
- Refer to specialist services for more complex challenges
- Support you to meet your individual infant feeding goals
- Help you to feed your baby responsively and teach you how to hand express your milk
- Provide advice about breastfeeding your baby when out and about or when returning to work

## 3. We can provide ongoing support by:

- Sharing with you why breastfeeding leads to the best outcomes for babies
- Helping you to maximise the amount of breast milk you provide to your baby
- Helping you to offer any other milks safely and responsively avoiding any disruption to breastfeeding
- Assessing feeding at each routine contact and as required
- Offering advice and information to support you to introduce healthy solid foods from 6 months including inviting you to a workshop

## 4. We support parents to have close and loving relationships with their babies by:

- Helping parents to understand their baby's emotional and social development and need for love, comfort and security
- Encouraging responsive care to all their cues
- Offering groups and workshops to support parent/child relationships

\*We will use terminology that is preferred by each family. For example, the terms breastfeeding and chest feeding can be used interchangeably depending on preference.