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**Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council**

**Family Hubs Service**

**Infant Feeding Policy**

**Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to ensure consistency amongst staff who work within

R&CBC Family Hub service when providing support and education for families around infant feeding and very early year’s development. All staff employed by R&CBC Family Hub service should work to ensure that this policy is implemented within the centres and in their everyday practice.

**Outcomes**

This policy aims to ensure that the services and care provided improve outcomes for children and their families with a particular emphasis on delivering:

* increases in breastfeeding rates at 6-8 weeks
* an increase in the number of mothers that formula feed doing so as safely and as responsively as possible
* an increase in the number of babies who start solid foods at around six months of age through the HENRY starting solids programme.
* services which promote responsive parent child relationships
* Local breastfeeding support groups for mothers

**Our commitment**

Redcar and Cleveland Family Hub service are committed to providing a high standard of care to families in the area, including:

* Working collaboratively with midwifery and health visiting colleagues and

 other organisations providing support for parents and young babies

* Supporting mothers to have a positive breastfeeding experience
* Working with families to improve and enhance parenting experience
* Ensuring local needs are met according to best practice for Redcar and Cleveland Family Hubs

**To enable this commitment**

* All staff employed by the R&CBC Family Hub service are familiarised

 with this policy on commencement of employment

* All staff receive training on how to implement the Baby Friendly standards

as appropriate to their role

* The WHO International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes is implemented within the centre(s)
* All materials produced for families reflect the Baby Friendly standards
* Parental engagement in both planning and evaluation is encouraged to ensure services meet their needs
* Internal audit, user satisfaction surveys and occasional participation surveys support continued improvement in services

**The Standards**

**Standard 1**

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| **Support pregnant women to recognise the importance of breastfeeding****and early relationships to the health and well-being of their baby** |

* This service recognises the importance of pregnancy as a time to build the

 foundations of future health and wellbeing and the role family hub’s play in

 supporting this.

* In partnership with Health Visiting teams and midwifery pregnant women will be contacted to offer them information and support through telephone contact, invitation to classes run at the centre, one to one contact, and National and

 Local Telephone Help Lines.

* All classes and information provided reflect the Baby Friendly standards and comply with the WHO Code.

**Standards 2**

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| **Protect and support breastfeeding in all areas of the service** |

* Mothers are welcome to breastfeed in all areas of Redcar and Cleveland Family Hubs and provided with comfortable facilities.
* All Redcar and Cleveland Family Hubs are registered as breastfeeding welcome.
* Breastfeeding mothers are informed of all services provided to support continued

Breastfeeding, including Family Hub Breast Feeding support groups, Health Visiting, Infant feeding Lead, Local and National telephone help lines.

* A clear referral system is in place to ensure that additional help is provided for

 breastfeeding mothers who require this.

* Breastfeeding is valued by staff within the hub, and mothers are encouraged

 and praised for providing any breastmilk.

* All mothers regardless of feeding method are supported to introduce solid food at

 around six months of age in accordance with World Health Organization and

 Department of Health guidelines.

* No advertising of breastmilk substitutes, bottles, teats or dummies is permitted

 within the R&CBC Family Hubs

**Standard 3**

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| **Support parents to have a close and loving relationship with their baby** |

* R&CBC Family Hub service promotes responsive parenting and parents are

 encouraged to respond to their baby’s needs for love, comfort and security.

* All materials and classes provided for parents reflect this philosophy.
* Parents who have decided to bottle feed are encouraged to do so responsively

 and information is provided to support this.

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| **Responsive feeding**The term responsive feeding is used to describe a feeding relationship which issensitive, reciprocal and about more than simply providing food for a baby.Staff should ensure that mothers attending the R&CBC Family Hubs have an opportunity to discuss feeding and behaviour cues. Mothers should be reassured that breastfeeding can be used to feed, comfort and calm babies and that breastfed babies cannot be overfed or ‘spoiled’ by frequent feeding. Mothers can also be reassured that breastfeeding can be an opportunity for them to rest. If a mother is bottle feeding she does need to be careful not to over-feed her baby. However, she can still feed responsively, by recognising feeding cues, holding her baby close and pacing the feed so that her baby is not forced to take more milk than he needs. Young babies feel more secure when they receive most feeds from their parents and this also helps parents and baby build a strong and loving bond. |