

PARENTS' GUIDE

Joint Hospital/Community Breastfeeding Policy

Aims

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.

Ways in Which We Will Help Mothers to Breastfeed Successfully

- **All the staff have been specially trained to help you to breastfeed your baby.**
- **During your pregnancy, you will be able to discuss breastfeeding individually with a midwife or health visitor who will answer any questions you may have.**
- **We recommend that you hold your new baby against your skin as soon as possible after birth. The staff will not interfere or hurry you but will be there to support you and to help you with your first breastfeed.**
- **A midwife will be available to explain how to put your baby to the breast correctly and to help with feeds in the early days. A health visitor will provide support later on.**
- **We will show you how to express your breast milk and we will give you a written sheet about this.**
- **We recommend that you keep your baby near you whenever you can so that you can get to know each other. We will give you information and advice about bed-sharing and infant safety. If any medical procedures are necessary in hospital, you will always be invited to accompany your baby.**
- **We will encourage you to feed your baby whenever he or she seems to be hungry.**
- **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 breast milk until they are 6 months old. If for some reason your baby needs some other food or drink before this, the reason will be fully explained to you by the staff.**
- **We will help you to recognise when your baby is ready for other foods (normally at about 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 give you a list of people who you can contact for extra help and support with breastfeeding, or who can help if you have a problem.**

(This is your guide to the breastfeeding policy. Please ask your health professional if you wish to see the full policy.)