

Bolton family Hubs Infant Feeding Policy

Document type:	Policy
Version:	1
Responsible Division:	Community Services Division
Author (Name and Job Title):	Vicky Davies Infant Feeding Co-ordinator, Family Hubs
Validated by:	0-19 Governance Meeting
Date validated:	July 2025
Ratified by:	Procedural Document Oversight Group
Date ratified:	August 2025
Responsible individual (Name and Job Title):	Vicky Davies Infant Feeding Co-ordinator, Family Hubs
Name of Executive Lead (for policies only):	Tyrone Roberts, Chief Nurse
Divisional Responsible Persons:	CSD Governance Support Manager
Key words:	Infant feeding, BFI, UNICEF, Family Hub, Baby friendly, Standards.
Next review date:	February 2028
Expiry date:	August 2028

Version control

Version	Type of Change	Date	Revisions from previous issues
1	New		

Equality Impact

Bolton NHS Foundation Trust strives to ensure equality of opportunity for all service users, local people and the workforce. As an employer and a provider of healthcare Bolton NHS FT aims to ensure that none are placed at a disadvantage as a result of its policies and procedures. This document has therefore been equality impact assessed to ensure fairness and consistency for all those covered by it regardless of their individuality. The results are shown in the Equality Impact Assessment (EIA).

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For the purpose of this policy the terms woman, mother and breastfeeding are used. We recognise that not all individuals identify as woman, mother and individuals may align with the term chest feeding.

Care and information within Bolton Family Hub and partner agencies will be delivered without discrimination regardless of, age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity leave, race, sex, sexual orientation, religion or belief. We advocate a compassionate person centred approach for the families of Bolton.

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1. Terminology

Parents

Mother, Father or Carer - A person who has parental responsibility for, or one who cares for a child or young person.

Partner agencies

A relationship between two or more agencies in which they work collaboratively sharing knowledge, skills and resources to deliver services to clients.

Exclusive breastfeeding

The infant receives only breastmilk (including breast milk that has been expressed) and nothing else, except for medications or vitamin and mineral supplements.

Responsive feeding

See Appendix 1

Solid food or complementary feeding

Foods and/or beverages (liquids, semisolids and solids) other than human milk or infant formula provided to an infant or young child to provide nutrients and energy. A baby needs no additional substance other than breast milk or infant formula for the first 6 months of life.

UNICEF Baby Friendly Initiative¹

The Baby friendly Initiative (BFI) is a global effort launched by the World Health Organisation (WHO) and UNICEF to implement practices that protect, promote and support breastfeeding. It was launched in the UK in 1994. The programme supports maternity, neonatal, community and hospital-based children's services to transform their care. Additionally UNICEF BFI works with universities to ensure that newly qualified Midwives and Health Visitors have the strong foundation of the knowledge needed to support families.

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WHO International code of marketing breast milk substitutes (The Code)

The Code was published by the World Health Organisation in 1981, it is an internally agreed voluntary code. It regulates the marketing of breast milk substitutes, bottles, teats and dummies. The Code states there should be no promotion of breast milk substitutes, bottles and teats to the general public. Only scientific and factual information, free from commercial bias is used in the care of babies and their parents. (See Appendix 2)

2. Purpose of the policy

- 2.1 This Policy has been written in line with UNICEF UK Baby Friendly Initiative standards¹. The purpose of the policy is to ensure all Family Hub staff, Voluntary Community and Social Enterprises (VCSE) and partner agencies understand their roles and responsibilities when supporting expectant parents, new parents and their families to feed and care for their baby.
- 2.2 All Staff who are employed or volunteer for Bolton Family Hubs, VCSE and partner agencies should work to ensure that this policy is implemented within their works for the Family Hubs and in their everyday practice.
- 2.3 This policy needs to be used in conjunction with Bolton NHS Foundation Trust Infant Feeding Policy (See Appendix 3).

3. Outcomes

- 3.1 This policy aims to ensure that the services and care providers improve outcomes for children and their families with a particular emphasis on delivering:
 - An increase in breastfeeding rates at 6-8 weeks.
 - An increase of exclusive breastfeeding up to 6 months and beyond along with complementary foods.
 - Effective support for parents who formula feed, to do so as safely and as responsively as possible.
 - An increase in the proportion of parents who introduce solid food to their baby in line with nationally agreed NICE guidance (2025)²
 - Service that promote responsive parent, child relationships.
 - Improvements in parents' experience of care.

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4. Our Commitment

Bolton Family Hub Network is committed to providing a high standard of care to families in this area, including:

- Working collaboratively with midwifery services, 0-19 colleagues and other organisation providing support for parents and young babies.
- Working with families to improve and enhance parenting experience.
- Support mother to have a positive breastfeeding experience.
- Working with families to improve and enhance parenting experience.
- A clear pathway in place for families who require additional support.
- Ensuring local needs are met according to best practice for Family Hubs via the Family Hub Model Framework (Appendix 4) and local data and intelligence informed by the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (Feb 2025)³

5. To enable this commitment

- All staff who are employed or volunteer within the Bolton Family Hub and Family Hub Network are familiar with this policy on commencement of employment.
- All staff who are employed or volunteer for the Family Hub receive training on how to implement the Baby Friendly standards as appropriate to their role.
- The International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes (The WHO Code - Appendix 2) is implemented within the settings.
- All materials produced for families reflect the Baby Friendly Standards.
- Parental engagement in Bolton planning and evaluation is encouraged to ensure services meet their needs.
- Internal audit and user satisfaction surveys support continued improvement in services.

6. The UNICEF Baby Friendly Standards

As a family hub we align with the UNICEF Baby Friendly Standards which provides a roadmap for services to improve care. The Baby Friendly initiative offers an evidence based approach to supporting breastfeeding, good infant nutrition and helping parent's to develop close and loving relationships with their babies (See Appendix 5).

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6.1 Standard 1

Support those who are pregnant to recognise the importance of breastfeeding and early relationships for their baby's health and wellbeing.

This service recognises the importance of pregnancy as a time to build the foundations of future health and wellbeing and the role Family Hubs play in supporting this.

Pregnant women will be made aware of the antenatal offer within the Family Hubs and partner agencies. This will include referral to support services available in the centres.

All group sessions and information provided reflect the Baby Friendly standards and comply with the code.

6.2 Standard 2

Protect and support breastfeeding in all areas of the service and enable mothers continue breastfeeding for as long as they wish.

Mothers are welcome to breastfeed in all areas of the family Hubs and comfortable facilities are provided.

Breastfeeding mothers are informed of all services within the Family Hubs Network and partner agencies that provide support for continued breastfeeding: specialist clinics, local feeding support groups, local resources, local online offers and National breastfeeding support lines.

A clear pathway is in place to ensure that additional help is provided for breastfeeding mothers and that this is an appropriate level according to need.

Breastfeeding is valued by staff within the centre and mothers are encouraged and praised for breastfeeding.

No advertising of breastmilk substitutes, bottles, teats or dummies is permitted within the Family Hub Network venues.

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6.3 **Standard 3**

Support parents to make informed decisions regarding the introduction of food or fluids other than breast milk.

Mothers who breastfeed have the information on why exclusive breastfeeding leads to the best outcomes for baby. When exclusive breastfeeding is not possible support is provided to maximise the amount of breastmilk their baby receives.

Parents who are formula feeding have the information they need to enable them to do so as safely as possible.

Parents who formula feed understand the importance of responsive feeding (Appendix 1)

All parents regardless of feeding method are supported to introduce solid food at around six months of age in accordance with World Health Organisation⁴ and NICE² guidance.

Parents are enabled to introduce solid foods in ways that optimise their baby's health and wellbeing.

Any groups or discussion in the Family Hubs around how to introduce solid food will include

- Exclusive breastfeeding should continue until 6 months of age and continue onwards following the introduction of solid foods up to 1 year but ideally 2 years and beyond (Public Health England 2021)^{5.}
- That solid food is introduced at around six months.
- Information to parents on babies developmental signs and readiness for solid food.
- How to introduce solid food to babies.
- Advice on appropriate foods for babies.

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6.4 Standard 4

Support parent's to have a close and loving relationship with their baby.

Bolton Family Hubs and partner agencies promote responsive parenting. Parents are encouraged to respond to their baby's need for love, comfort and security.

All materials and group sessions 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.

Parents will be given information about local parenting support that is available in Bolton.

7.0 Monitoring and Review

- 7.1 Bolton Family Hubs requires that compliance with this is policy is audited at least annually using the UNICEF UK Baby Friendly Initiative audit tool to monitor staff knowledge (2024). Staff involved in carrying out this audit require training on the use of this tool. Audit results will be reported to clinical governance groups and the breastfeeding strategy group. An action plan will be agreed to address any areas of non-compliance that have been identified.
- **7.2** Training curriculum documents for all areas will be reviewed yearly and updated as required by the Infant feeding Lead.
- **7.3** Annual training updates will take place and recorded on the training database.
- **7.4** All documentation fully supports the implementation of the UNICEF BFI standards.
- **7.5** Outcomes will be monitored by
 - Breastfeeding rates at birth (Bolton FT tableau report)
 - Breastfeeding rates at 10-14 days (Bolton FT tableau report)
 - Breastfeeding rates at 6-8 weeks (Bolton FT tableau report)
- 7.6 The service aims for audit results to be the gold standards of 100% against all the UNICEF BFI standards within this policy, however a benchmark of 80% will be deemed as acceptable in regards to benchmarking of progress.

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7.7 Monitoring table

Area to be monitored	Methodology	Who	Reported to	Frequency
Staff Knowledge	UNICEF BFI Audit tool	Infant feeding Lead	Governance, Infant feeding strategy group	Quarterly
90% Staff attendance at annual Infant feeding training	Review of Staff matrix	Infant feeding Lead	Management , Governance , Infant feeding strategy group	Quarterly
Families experience with the service	UNICEF BFI Audit tool	Infant feeding Lead	Governance, Infant feeding strategy group	Quarterly
Data collection of breastfeeding at – Initiation 10-14 days 6-8 weeks	Tableau Report	Business intelligence (Bolton FT) and Infant feeding lead	Governance, Infant feeding strategy group	Quarterly
Family hub Environment and documentation	UNICEF BFI environmental Audit tool	Infant feeding lead	Family Hub management and partner agencies, Governance, Infant feeding strategy group.	Bi-annually

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7. References:

- 1), UNICEF UK Baby Friendly Initiative (2024), Guide to the UNICEF UK baby friendly initiative standards. Third addition. UNICEF UK Baby Friendly Initiative, London.
- 2), NICE (2025) Maternal and Child nutrition www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng247
- 3), Joint strategic needs assessment (2025) www.boltonjsna.org.uk
- 4), World Health Organisation (2003) Global Strategy for infant and young child feeding
- 5), Public Health England (2021) Early Years high impact area 3: Supporting Breastfeeding

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8. Appendices

Appendix 1

Responsive feeding

The term responsive feeding is used to describe a feeding relationship which is sensitive, reciprocal and about more than simply providing food for a baby.

Staff should ensure that mothers attending the 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.

UNICEF UK Baby Friendly Initiative (2014) Sample infant policy

http://unicef.uk/responsivefeeding

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Appendix 2



www.unicef.org.uk/babyfriendly/baby-friendly-resources/international-code-marketing-breastmilk-substitutes-resources/guide-to-working-within-the-code/(accessed 21/08/2025)

Appendix 3



Latest version found on Trust Intranet - boltonft.sharepoint.com/Shared

Documents/Forms/Guidelines.aspx?id=%2FShared Documents%2FPolicies%2FInfant

Feeding Policy%2C Breastfeeding%2C Formula feeding%2C Caring for Infants

nutritional%2C safety and wellbeing needs%2Epdf&parent=%2FShared

Documents%2FPolicies

Appendix 4



Annex_E_-_family_h ub_model_framewor

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/62f0ed04d3bf7f75bc16c0d7/Annex_E_family_hub_model_framework.pdf (accessed 21/08/2025)

Appendix 5



Guide-to-the-Unice f-UK-Baby-Friendly-I

https://www.unicef.org.uk/babyfriendly/baby-friendly-resources/implementing-standards-resources/guide-to-the-standards/ (accessed 21/08/2025)

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Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening Form - Stage 1

(Guidance on completing this form is available on BOB)

Use the screening tool to determine necessary actions required for promoting equality, diversity, and inclusion, and reducing health inequalities. If negative impacts are identified or further investigation is needed to assess potential effects, a stage 2 Full EIA Improvement Plan must be conducted and sent to EDI@boltonft.nhs.uk for monitoring purposes.

1. Details

Title of Procedural document/ Plan/ Project	Bolton family hub infant feeding policy					
Service/ Team/ Department	0-19 Public Division Family Care Division Health nursing					
Type of activity	Function Poli	icy □ Projec	t □ Plan □ Service□ Other⊠			
Name of Assessor	Victoria Davies					

2. Description

What are the main aims and purpose of your activity? The intention of this document is create a consistant and co-orinated approach to enable the staff working within the family hub to ensure they are able to uphold and work towards the UNICEF baby friendly initiave standards.					
What is the expected outome? To allow staff within the family hubs to have the tool and information to ensure best practice within infant feeding. To allow the family hubs to gain UNICEF baby friendly accreditation.					
Who will be affected? ⊠ Patients □ Carers ⊠ Staff ⊠ Other					
Has any engagement activity occurred to inform this assessment? If so, what feedback was received, and what changes were made as a result? The policy has been requested to provide and ensure all staff working within the family hubs provide a consistant approach to infant feeding.					

3. Assessment of impact

A. Impact on	How will the activity impact diverse groups?	lm	pac	ct	
people with protected characteristics	Include the evidence you used to assess the likely effects and any changes you plan to make as a result.	Positive	Negative *	Neutral	Unsure
Age				Χ	
Disability				Χ	

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		1 1	1.7	
Gender			X	
Reassignment				
Marriage and			X	
Civil				
Partnership				
Pregnancy and			X	
Maternity				
Race and			X	
Ethnicity				
Religion and			X	
Belief				
Sex	Parts of this policy impact positively on women and or mothers.	Х		
Sexual Orientation	For the purpose of this policy the terms woman, mother and breastfeeding are used. We recognise that not all individuals identify as woman, mother and individuals may align with the term chest feeding. Care and information within Bolton Family Hub and partner agencies will be delivered without discrimination regardless of, age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity leave, race, sex, sexual orientation, religion or belief. We advocate a compassionate person centred approach for the families of Bolton.		X	
Human Rights			X	

B 1 41								
B. Is there an impact on other	Carers		Low Income Families		_	psy, velle	, Roma 8 er	k □
disadvantaged or inclusion health	Homeless people	Homeless people					Forces Inity	
groups at risk of health	Drug & Alcohol Dependence	☐ Looked After Children			Contact With Justice System			
inequalities?	Living In Deprived Areas		Living In Remote Locations				e.g. Sex	
Group affected Do inequalities exist for the activity either reduce access to healthcare, exoutcomes? If so, describe evidence used to inform			r widen inequalities in rience or health now and include	d	Positive	1)	Unsure	

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* C. Can any negative impacts be justified?	Yes ⊠ Please detail how: To ensure a consistant approach is taken.	No □ - (move to Stage 2 an complete a Full EIA)

4. Supporting people with disabilities

What reasonable adjustment, if any, will you put in place to ensure people with disabilities/health conditions/differences receive an equal service?

N/A		

5. Changes made or action to be taken

Have you revised your proposal based on the screening results or identified further actions to reduce negative impacts and maximise positive ones? (If yes, please complete stage 2 Full EIA)

Concern	Changes made/ action required	Lead person	Deadline
N/A			

6. Full Equality Impact Assessment required?

Criteria	* Yes	No
Are you unsure of the potential affects and need to investigate further?		\boxtimes
Are any groups excluded from this activity and cannot be justified?		\boxtimes
Does the activity create any problems or barriers for communities?		\boxtimes
Can it lead to widening health inequalities?		\boxtimes
Will the document have a negative impact on community relations?		\boxtimes
Full EIA (Stage 2) required No ⊠ Yes □ (Access a copy of the form on the advice and guidance contact the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Team at EDI@boltonft.nhs.uk)	intrane	t. For

7. Monitoring Arrangements

How will the future outcomes of the activity be monitored to ensure diverse groups are not disadvantaged in any way?

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Area to be monitored	Methodology	Lead	Reporting arrangements	Frequency
Policy	Check if staff have highlighted any issues or necessary changes required within the document	Victoria Davies	Training Forums and Meeting Family Hubs managers meeting Service Matron Speciality governance	Annual review

8. Impact Score

Level of impact	High □	Medium ⊠	Low □	Date EIA completed 28/5/2025
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Document Development Checklist – Document Control Policy

Section 1	To be completed by Lead Author
Type of document :	Policy
Lead author:	Vicky Davies
Is this new or does it replace an existing document?	New
What is the rationale/ Primary purpose for the document	To ensure all staff within Bolton Family Hubs provide best practice to support expectant and new mothers and their partners to feed and care for their baby in ways which support optimum health and safety, building strong and loving parent and infant relationships. Acknowledging that all mothers have the right to receive clear and impartial information to enable them to make a fully informed choice.
What evidence/standard is the document based on?	UNICEF baby friendly initiative, NICE Maternal and Child Nutrition, World Health organisation, Global strategy for infant and young child feeding.
Is this document being used anywhere else, locally or nationally?	Bolton Council – Family Hubs
Who will use the document?	Staff working within and for the Family Hubs
Staff/stakeholders consulted:	Midwifery Infant feeding specialist, 0-19 Management, Family Hubs management, Peer support (VCSE)
What is the implementation and dissemination plan? (How will this be shared?)	Through local induction, annual training for infant feeding, forwarded to all Family Hub management to disseminate to staff.
Are there any service/resource implications? (How will any change to services be met? Resource implications?)	No
Are there any additional training requirements? If so have these been discussed as part of the implantation plan?	Training to be given annually to all staff within the Family Hubs
How will the document be reviewed? (When, how and who will be responsible?)	Reviewed every 3 years by the Infant Co- ordinator for the Family Hubs
Keywords (Include keywords for the document controller to include to assist searching for the policy on the Intranet)	Infant feeding, Breastfeeding, UNICEF, BFI, Family Hubs, Standards.
Any document that relates to software owned or administered by the trusts IT Service Desk should be reviewed by the senior technician before it goes for ratification	Signature on behalf of IT Services:
Any document that gives an instruction to prescribe or administer a medicine should have that instruction reviewed by the senior divisional pharmacist before it goes for ratification.	Signature of Pharmacist:
Signed and dated by Chair of validating committee/group	Signed:

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	Designation: Divisional Governance Lead Date: 28/07/2025
Signed and dated By Chair of Approving Committee/Group	Signed: Sue and
	Designation: Assistant Director of Quality Governance Date: 21 st August 2025
Final Sign off Signed and dated	Signed:
	Designation: Chief Nurse Date: 8 th September 2025

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