

Breastfeeding Policy

Policy Statement

Chesterfield Borough Council are proud to have breastfeeding friendly venues and welcome breastfeeding in all areas of our premises.

The aim of this policy is to ensure consistency amongst staff to create an atmosphere within which a mother is able to breastfeed comfortably and confidently.

Policy Context

It is entirely legal to breastfeed in public places anywhere in the UK.

Breastfeeding in public places is protected under the Equality Act (2010) for as long as a mother wishes to breastfeed her baby, toddler or small child without an age restriction. Protection covers any public space from parks and leisure facilities to public buildings and using public transport.

Service providers dealing directly with the public must not discriminate, harass or victimise a woman because she is breastfeeding. Discrimination includes refusing to provide a service, providing a lower standard of service or providing a service on different terms.

For more information please see www.gov.uk/equality-act-2010-guidance

Policy Principles

Mothers and their breastfeeding children will be welcomed into our premises. Appropriate breastfeeding friendly signage will be displayed.

All of our staff will support the needs and rights of mothers breastfeeding and will respect the mother's freedom to choose where to breastfeed; All staff will be aware of comfortable or discreet areas (if they exist and are available on the premises) they can offer to the mother to feed if requested. The presence of a breastfeeding room does not mean that she must choose to use the room.

Our staff will not disturb a mother who is breastfeeding, e.g. do not ask her to cover up, stop, or move to another area unless there is safety concern or blockage of exit/ passage way.

If another customer/visitor to the premises objects to breastfeeding they should be told by a member of staff that breastfeeding is supported and if appropriate offer the complainant another service/opportunity. It is key to note that it is the complainant that should be offered another service/opportunity and not the mother.

If the situation cannot be resolved readily, staff should refer customers/visitors to their line manager.

Toilets or restrooms are not appropriate places for feeding babies and should not be offered.

Responsibilities and Policy Revision

A copy of this policy should be issued to all new staff members within one week of commencement of employment and a copy will be made available on the council's intranet. Line managers will ensure that staff are familiar with the policy, know the areas of the building with more privacy and are confident in managing the common scenarios.

Council services may adopt this policy to specific environments for the benefit of customers and staff, such as breast feeding in swimming pools within the Sport and Leisure facilities.

Distributing and updating this policy annually is the responsibility of Chesterfield Borough Council.

APPENDIX 1: Leisure Centre Context

Induction

- A copy of this policy should be issued to all new staff members within one week of employment and form part of their induction.
- Staff members will familiarise themselves with the locations of comfortable or discreet areas to feed.

How will the Policy be implemented in our Leisure Centres?

- The policy is relevant to all areas of the centre, to include breastfeeding in swimming pools, the café and during all activities.
- Managers will display breastfeeding friendly stickers and appropriate signage where possible.
All our staff will support the needs and rights of mothers breastfeeding and will make mothers and children welcome.
- If another customer/visitor to the premises objects to discreet breastfeeding they should be informed that we are in support of mothers who are breastfeeding. If appropriate we will offer the complainant an alternative service/opportunity.
Remember, it is the complainant that should be offered another service/opportunity and not the mother.
- If the situation cannot be resolved readily staff should refer customers/visitors to their line manager.

Health and Safety

- Quite often a mother may be supervising another child so they may need to breastfeed their baby in whatever area they are using, e.g. within a swimming pool. It would not be practical for the mother to vacate the area for the purpose of breastfeeding their baby.
- During breastfeeding there is no risk or health hazard to anyone else; breast milk is antibacterial, and antimicrobial.
- Breastfeeding is hygienic and does not pose any risk to the baby or the mother.