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**Norfolk
County Council**

Infant Feeding Friendly Norfolk: information for businesses, organisations and venues



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What is the Infant Feeding Friendly Norfolk scheme?

Families should feel welcomed to feed their babies anytime, anywhere and however they choose to feed. All forms of feeding babies should be normalised and encouraged in communities and public spaces so that families have confidence to get out and about.

What does the scheme aim to do?

The scheme encourages commercial, health and community settings to join the scheme and make a pledge to provide infant feeding friendly spaces. By doing this, we aim to ensure a wider acceptance and normalisation of breastfeeding, alongside other methods of feeding.

Many businesses, organisations and venues in Norfolk are already providing ideal spaces for infant feeding families and therefore, by joining the scheme, will simply receive the recognition that they deserve. This booklet, along with the training materials provided, can offer useful guidance for those locations that may require a little more support to be infant feeding friendly.

We aim to achieve greater acceptance of breastfeeding and support of wider infant feeding by:

- Making it clear that infant feeding is welcome by clearly displaying an infant feeding friendly window sticker
- Ensuring that staff members and volunteers are aware of the legal rights that breastfeeding mothers have to feed their infant in public
- Enabling all staff members to understand more about the health benefits of breastfeeding and how their support can make a difference
- Supporting and encouraging businesses and organisations to consider how best to support infant feeding families through their space and service they can offer

Why has Norfolk introduced the scheme?

The World Health Organisation recommends that babies are exclusively breastfed for the first six months of life, yet the UK has some of the lowest breastfeeding rates in the world.

Public Health England has recorded the following data:

- 74% of mothers start to breastfeed
- 44% are breastfeeding at 6 weeks
- 36% are breastfeeding at 6 months
- only 1% of babies are exclusively breastfed until they are 6 months old

Why do people stop breastfeeding?

Some parents lack the support and confidence to sustain breastfeeding, and one of the reasons for stopping is because they can feel anxious to breastfeed whenever and wherever, especially if they don't feel welcome to do so.

If mums, dads and other carers feel restricted by the lack of feeding support they have or by the environments that they visit, then often they can feel like they don't have much choice. However, no matter which way a baby is fed, all families should feel encouraged to get out and about and feel comfortable when doing so.



What can an Infant Feeding Friendly space look like?

In a recent survey, it was concluded that a warm, friendly smile from staff and others was one of the most important determinants in making families feel comfortable and supported to feed their infant. The core principal to the Infant Feeding Friendly pledge is that all feeding methods are welcomed and that all mums, dads and other carers are supported.

What must an Infant Feeding Friendly space have?

- The Infant Feeding Friendly scheme window sticker and pledge displayed to show all visitors and customers that infant feeding is welcome and supported in all areas of the venue.
- A comfortable space for parents and carers to feed their infant. This might include more comfortable seating or an area with a little more space.
- Staff members who are aware of the scheme and know how to implement the infant feeding policy.
- Staff who are able to support a parent to feed their infant in a more private space if requested (toilets and baby changing facilities are not appropriate spaces).

What other facilities and services might a business or organisation consider?

- Ask if there is anything that the parent or carer needs.
- The offer of a glass of water for the parent who is feeding an infant.
- The option of carrying food and drink items over to where the parent is sat.
- Easy access into the premises and a suitable place to park the pushchair.
- Baby changing facilities in disabled toilets and/or both male and female toilets.
- High chairs.
- A play area for older children to keep busy in or the offer of colouring resources.
- Promoting the scheme on a business' website and/or social media.
- For establishments providing food and drink, enable mums, dads or other carers feed their infant without purchasing food or drink.

Why should a business or organisation join the scheme?

Who can sign up to the scheme?

The scheme is open to any venue that welcomes the public. We therefore encourage any business or organisation to sign up to the scheme if they might be visited by mums, dads and other carers who may feed their infant whilst on the premises.

Examples of businesses, organisations or venues who are encouraged to sign up to the scheme include:

- Restaurants /cafes
- Schools /nurseries
- Leisure centres
- Libraries
- Community centres
- Parks and museums
- Health centres / GP practices
- Hairdressers /opticians/ dentists
- High street shops

What are the benefits of joining the scheme?

- There is no cost to join the scheme.
- It may attract new and repeating customers.
- Infant Feeding Friendly businesses are promoted and publicised through the scheme's communications and website.
- You will be making a difference to your community and playing a part in improving public health.
- There is the opportunity to improve customer relations.
- Mothers are part of informal networks and will often recommend places to visit to others.





How do you sign up to the scheme?

1. Fill out the registration form on the Infant Feeding Friendly Norfolk website. You can contact IFFN@norfolk.gov.uk if you need further information or any assistance with joining.
2. Develop a written infant feeding policy to ensure consistency for all members of staff. If required, a template policy can be sent to you once you have submitted your details via the registration form.
3. We will require a copy of the policy once your registration form has been received and you have successfully joined the scheme. This can be sent to IFFN@norfolk.gov.uk.
4. Ensure that the sticker and certificate contained in the pack is clearly displayed for all customers and visitors to see, for example at the main entrance on the door or front window.
5. Share the training materials with staff members so they understand the scheme and know how to support families who visit.

Frequently Asked Questions

Does it cost anything to join the scheme?

No, it is free to sign up to the scheme.

Do all staff members need to complete training?

Training materials will be available to you digitally as part of the scheme. We ask that you offer this training to staff members who are supporting families on the premises.

Do we have to provide a private room?

No, a private room is not compulsory. Most parents will feed their baby anywhere, providing they have somewhere to sit. Some may ask if there is a more private or quiet space to feed in if an infant gets distracted by noise and movement or if it feels more comfortable. Those breastfeeding should never be told that they must use a private space and it is never appropriate to suggest a toilet.

A more private space could simply mean that chairs are facing away from a busy spot on the premises or seating with higher back rests can provide some privacy. A screen or plants can also be repositioned to create a more discreet area.

What do I do if another customer complains about infant feeding?

The law in England, Scotland and Wales (under the Equality Act 2010) ensures that a mother cannot be stopped from breastfeeding or bottle feeding her baby in a place that she is legally allowed to be. If someone asks you to tell a mother to stop feeding their child then you could show them the infant feeding policy scheme or sticker and pledge certificate on display. You could ask the person who raised the concern whether they want to move to sit somewhere else, if this is possible, but must not ask the mother who is breastfeeding to move.

Can I sign up to the scheme even if we don't have a seating area?

Yes, definitely. Often all that is needed to feed an infant is a chair to sit on and the knowledge that the parent or carer is very welcome to use that space.





www.norfolk.gov.uk/infantfeeding

For any queries, please contact IFFN@norfolk.gov.uk