

Breast Feeding Policy

The Exwick Ark Ltd is committed to encouraging breastfeeding and providing ongoing support to breastfeeding mothers and employees. We are signed up to the breast feeding friendly network and display a poster, certificate of commitment and sticker in each of our settings.

Our breastfeeding policy is as follows:

1. Breastfeeding mothers and employees will be provided a place to breastfeed or express their milk.

Breastfeeding mothers and employees shall be provided a private and sanitary place to breastfeed their babies or express milk. This area will have an electrical socket (if needed for pumping), comfortable chair, and nearby access to a “clean sink” for washing hands and cleaning breast pump equipment. Mothers and employees are welcome to breastfeed in the classroom as well should they choose to do so.

2. A refrigerator/freezer will be made available for storage of expressed breastmilk.

Breastfeeding mothers and employees may store their expressed breastmilk in the nursery room refrigerator. Bags of breastmilk will be stored separately for each child. Bags of breastmilk for each child will be placed in a separate labelled sealed plastic bag or in a separate labelled hard-sided container as bags tend to spill or leak. Mothers must provide their own containers, clearly labelled with the child’s name and date milk was expressed. Unlabelled containers of breastmilk will not be used or accepted. Store milk in the back of the main body of the refrigerator, where the temperature is the coolest.

3. Sensitivity will be shown to breastfeeding mothers and their babies.

We will work with parents prior to their infant’s first day in nursery to transition their infant to a bottle or cup feedings if they are not going to return to the nursery to feed. We will work with parents to make an emergency plan for feeding their infant in the unexpected event that there is no breastmilk available at the nursery. We will develop a feeding plan with each family including feeding infants on demand as we observe hunger cues and coordinating the last feeding of the day to meet the mother’s feedings needs (either to feed or await mother’s feeding), with the understanding that we will feed the infant a small amount of milk to console them if the infant is in distress. Infant formula and solids foods will not be provided unless requested by the mother.

4. We will feed an infant in a way that mimics breastfeeding.

Infants will be held closely and upright. We will switch infants from one arm to the other midway through a feeding to provide equal eye stimulation and facial muscle development, help pace feedings, and prevent infants from developing a preference for one side. Bottles will never be propped.

Babies will not be offered more than 3-4 oz of breast milk per bottle. If they are still displaying signs of hunger after this amount then another 1-2 oz will be offered until they are satisfied. Research has shown that breast fed babies take on average 3-4oz per feed and this reduces as they start to add solids into their diet. We will suggest that breast feeding mothers send milk in both 3-4 oz feed and 1-2oz snack sized packets to avoid wastage.

A baby who is with us for a full day will need on average 10-15oz of breast milk provided, however, this will be dependent on other factors such as if they sleep through the night without feeding and therefore require greater milk during the day. Breast feeding Mum's can seek skilled support from a breast feeding counsellor in establishing how much milk their baby is going to need whilst they are apart.

5. Communication

We will communicate the infant's changing schedule so a mother can adjust her schedule for pumping and/or visiting to feed her infant. We will provide daily communication for parents that document times/amounts of each feeding, along with nappy changes, naps, etc.

6. Staff Training

Staff will be trained in handling, storing, heating, and feeding breastmilk. All staff will read our breast feeding policy as part of their induction.

7. Reheating milk.

The baby may drink the milk cool, at room temperature, or warmed to body temperature. Heat breastmilk in a container of warm water or in a bottle warmer. Milk may be kept in the refrigerator for 24 hours after it is thawed. Swirl the container of milk to mix the cream back in, and distribute the heat evenly. Do not shake the milk. Milk left in the bottle after a feeding should be discarded and not used again.

7. Handling breast milk.

Gloves are not required when handling breastmilk, but are recommended if staff have open wounds on their hands. Waterproof bandages can also be used to cover open wounds. Staff will prepare a clean work space to prepare a bottle by sanitizing the

counter or by placing a clean paper towel on the counter. Staff will wash their hands at a “clean sink” before and after handling or feeding breastmilk. All containers/bags/ bottles of breastmilk will be checked closely before serving to ensure the correct breastmilk is given to the correct child. Infants will be held when given a bottle, or if they are able to hold their bottle themselves, they will be kept within an arm’s reach to ensure other infants do not have access to their bottle. Special attention will be given to ensure no bottle is left within reach of children.

8. Use of cups

If parents request that breastmilk is served to their child once the child is no longer bottle fed, it must be served in a controlled manner to prevent an exposure incident. Breastmilk will be served in a cup and kept out of the reach of other children. The cup will be given directly to the child and immediately returned to a place out of reach when the child is finished drinking.

9. Breastfeeding employees will be provided flexible breaks to accommodate feeding.

Breastfeeding employees shall be provided a flexible schedule for breastfeeding or pumping to provide breastmilk for their child(ren). The time allowed would not exceed the normal time allowed to other employees for lunch and breaks. For time above and beyond normal lunch and breaks, sick/annual leave may be used.

10. Breastfeeding promotion information will be displayed.

Information on breastfeeding will be provided for all staff and volunteers. Positive promotion of breastfeeding will be displayed in the nursery.