

Gosport Breastfeeding Welcome Scheme

Five great reasons for your business to join

- **It makes a real improvement to customer service**

Training staff/volunteers to be welcoming and helpful to breastfeeding mums encourages them to be more helpful and considerate to all customers. This will boost customer satisfaction and loyalty which is good for your business.

- **It can attract a new customer/client base**

When a new mum finds a place that welcomes them to feed their babies, they pass on the good news and customer numbers can grow as a result. This could mean more custom during quieter times for your business.

- **There is little or no cost to you**

Little things go a long way and breastfeeding mums say what they appreciate most is a welcoming atmosphere and friendly staff/volunteers– something you can provide for free.

- **It can improve your image and get you free publicity**

By becoming breastfeeding welcome you are making a positive contribution to helping babies get the best start in life. It is great for your image as it demonstrates that you are dedicated to making your customers happy. Businesses that become breastfeeding welcome will also get publicity from being listed on our websites and from word of mouth recommendations between families and health professionals.

- **Helping the community**

By joining the Scheme your business will be providing a safe and welcoming place for mums and playing an active part in encouraging more mothers to breastfeed.



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Why is it important to support breastfeeding mums?

Breastfeeding has many benefits. According to the latest research, babies who are breastfed have a smaller chance of:

- Being obese and developing diabetes when they are older
- Developing eczema
- Getting ear, chest and tummy infections resulting in hospital visits
- Being fussy about new foods
- Being constipated

There are advantages for mums who breastfeed too:

- Lower risk of breast and ovarian cancer
- Breastfeeding uses up about 500 extra calories a day so it may be easier to lose pregnancy weight
- It saves money - formula feeding can cost £50 or more per a month
- It is a lot less hassle - there is no need to clean and sterilise bottles, boil kettles and wait for the milk to cool every few hours during the day and night

For more information about the health benefits of breastfeeding visit

www.nhs.uk/Conditions/pregnancy-and-baby/pages/why-breastfeed.aspx#close

www.southernhealth.nhs.uk/services/childrens-services/breastfeeding-service/



Gosport Breastfeeding Welcome Scheme

Information about the Law

A business cannot discriminate against mums who are breastfeeding a child of any age.

The Equality Act 2010 has specifically clarified that it is unlawful for a business to discriminate against a woman because she is breastfeeding a child.

A business may ask a breastfeeding woman to leave their premises if the reason for this request is not due to her breastfeeding. However, if the woman later claims that discrimination occurred because she was breastfeeding, the business will have to prove that there was in fact no discrimination.

- DO make sure women you are providing services to are allowed to breastfeed on your premises if they want to
- DO also ensure that mothers breastfeeding babies are not discriminated against, no matter how old the infant is
- DO train all your employees/volunteers, especially those who deal with the public, to be aware of the protection from discrimination given to breastfeeding mothers under the Equality Act 2010
- DON'T forget, under the Equality Act 2010, discriminating against someone because they are with a breastfeeding mother is also prohibited. So companions of breastfeeding mothers who are also treated unfairly may have a claim too.

FAQs

- **Am I responsible for how other customers treat a woman who is breastfeeding?** Yes, you may be responsible, and you will be responsible if other customers' behaviour has been brought to your attention and you failed to act. You have an obligation to ensure that a woman who is breastfeeding while receiving a service you provide is not treated unfairly. The Equality Act 2010 aims to give women complete confidence to breastfeed while going about their day-to-day business. Businesses must facilitate this.
- **Does this mean I have to create a separate facility to allow women customers to breastfeed?**
No, but you are under an obligation to ensure that a woman can breastfeed without being treated unfairly. It is up to you to decide how best to do this.

For further information about the Equality Act 2010 visit
www.gov.uk/equality-act-2010-guidance



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Joining the Scheme is simple

- Click on the link on our website or in the email to sign up
- We'll then contact you to issue you with a Breastfeeding Welcome sticker
- The name of your business will be added to a list of premises participating in the scheme and published on the Gosport Breastfeeding Welcome Scheme webpage on the Gosport Borough Council website <https://www.gosport.gov.uk/sections/community/health-and-wellbeing/gbfwelcome/>
- We'll then keep in touch with you to check you're still keen to support the scheme

The Gosport Breastfeeding Welcome Scheme is supported by;

Southern Health
NHS Foundation Trust



GOSPORT
Borough Council

Portsmouth Hospitals **NHS**
NHS Trust

the breastfeeding network
Fareham & Gosport



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What your staff/volunteers need to know

To ensure that your business has a consistent approach to supporting mums who breastfeed on your premises, it is recommended that all your staff/volunteers are made aware of the Breastfeeding Welcome Scheme, its criteria and the legal position regarding the treatment of breastfeeding mums.

Staff should be aware of the following:

- It is unlawful for a business to discriminate against a woman because she is breastfeeding a child as specified within the Equality Act 2010.
- How to explain to members of the public and breastfeeding mums what the Gosport Breastfeeding Welcome Scheme is all about, and why your business has joined.
- Staff/volunteers should be aware that breastfeeding mums should not be asked to move to accommodate other customers.
- Staff/volunteers should be advised on how to respond to customers who may complain, and who to refer to if they are unable to resolve the problem. The customer can be advised to contact the Gosport Breastfeeding Welcome Scheme Steering Group via gbfwelcome@gosport.gov.uk if the business is unable to resolve the complaint.
- It is preferable to have babies that are breastfeeding rather than crying and disturbing other customers.
- Let staff/volunteers know if you will be including information about your membership of the scheme on your business literature.



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Agreement

- Breastfeeding is welcome in any public area of our venue
- A mum who is breastfeeding will not be asked to move or to stop breastfeeding
- The Gosport Breastfeeding Welcome Scheme window sticker will be displayed at all times
- Staff/volunteers are aware of the scheme and how to be supportive to the needs of breastfeeding mothers.
- Breastfeeding Welcome is included in our customer care procedures and policies where appropriate, and guidance is available for our staff on how to effectively respond to a potential complaint about breastfeeding from another customer.
- A private area may be made available if needed and if space allows.



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Further information;

Contact us:

Email: gbfwelcome@gosport.gov.uk.

Comments, feedback or suggestions are most welcome too.

