

Barnsley Breastfeeding Welcome Scheme



BARNSLEY
Metropolitan Borough Council



I feel especially comfortable breastfeeding in Barnsley where there are signs up everywhere welcoming it.

Feedback from a Barnsley mum.

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What is the Breastfeeding Welcome Scheme?

The Breastfeeding Welcome Scheme is a local Public Health initiative to protect, promote and support breastfeeding.

A breastfeeding mother has a legal right to breastfeed anywhere under the Equality Act 2010, however for various reasons many women do not feel confident in doing this.

The Breastfeeding Welcome Scheme aims to encourage and empower mothers to breastfeed their children anytime, anywhere.

Nationally 8 out of 10 women stop breastfeeding before they want to. We know that part of the reason for this can be confidence in feeding in public places.



Our mums have shared with us that seeing local places signed up to our Breastfeeding Welcome Scheme helps them to feel supported and more confident when feeding out and about.

We asked 142 mums about their experiences breastfeeding in Barnsley.

121

mums told us that they breastfed often when out and about.

"I've always fed wherever I've needed to.

Making friends at the Wednesday morning group and going for coffee or food around town afterwards in the early days helped my confidence to do so as did seeing the signs."

"We breastfeed everywhere and anywhere. I was a little nervous at first but I just took a family member with me and went to places that have the breastfeeding friendly signs up."

"Having the signs around is really nice whenever I see them, I feel that it also helps normalise breastfeeding in public to people who may not be used to seeing anyone breastfeeding."

Why is breastfeeding so important?

Breastfeeding has so many positive health benefits for baby and mum. It helps families to save money and its great for the environment.

Breastfeeding has the following health benefits for infants:

- provides essential nutrition
- protects against diseases
- promotes healthy brain development in children
- reduces infant mortality
- gives children a strong start in life for a healthier future



Breastfeeding also fosters a positive bond between mothers and babies. This encourages emotional wellbeing, mental health, social development, and readiness for school.

"I breastfeed out and about all the time including a bench next to international market. I feel especially comfortable in Barnsley where there are signs up everywhere welcoming it."

Feedback from a Barnsley mum.

Why sign up?

There are many benefits for you signing up to the Breastfeeding Welcome Scheme:

- You are making a positive contribution to helping babies get the best start in life.
- By informing/training your staff about the scheme and encouraging them to be welcoming, kind and helpful to breastfeeding mothers, this will boost customer satisfaction and loyalty and can be great for business.
- It demonstrates that you are dedicated to good customer service and supportive of the local community.
- It can attract a new customer/client base – new mums will make special efforts to get to know other women in their situation. When they find a place that welcomes them to feed their babies, they pass on the good news and customer numbers grow as a result.
- Not only that, but their visits tend to coincide with quieter times of the day, so they could potentially bring new custom.
- It can improve your image and get you free publicity. Businesses that sign up to the breastfeeding welcome scheme will be publicised on the Barnsley Council website, promoted on social media platforms and also from work-of-mouth recommendations between families.
- It's free to sign up to and you can get these benefits without having to spend a lot of money.



What we ask from you as a Breastfeeding Welcome venue

- Provide a welcoming atmosphere for breastfeeding families, accepting that mums can breastfeed anywhere they choose to.
- Prominently display promotional material (provided by the scheme).
- Ensure all existing staff and new employees are made aware of the scheme and know how to be supportive to the needs of breastfeeding families. This may include helping mothers carry food and drink to their table. It's hard to juggle a hungry baby, find a free table, and carry a tray.
- If a mum asked to breastfeed in private, every effort should be made wherever possible. It's not acceptable to offer a toilet as a place to breastfeed a baby. Although you do not need to offer a separate breastfeeding room to sign up to the scheme, there are other changes you could make if required.

This may include rearranging furniture to provide a little privacy if a mother wishes. There might already be parts of your venue that offer privacy without you having to make any changes. Sometimes a particular chair, or seated area next to an indoor plant etc. might offer all the privacy a mother might need.

“I always find it reassuring to see the Breastfeeding Welcome signs around in places when I’m out and about.”

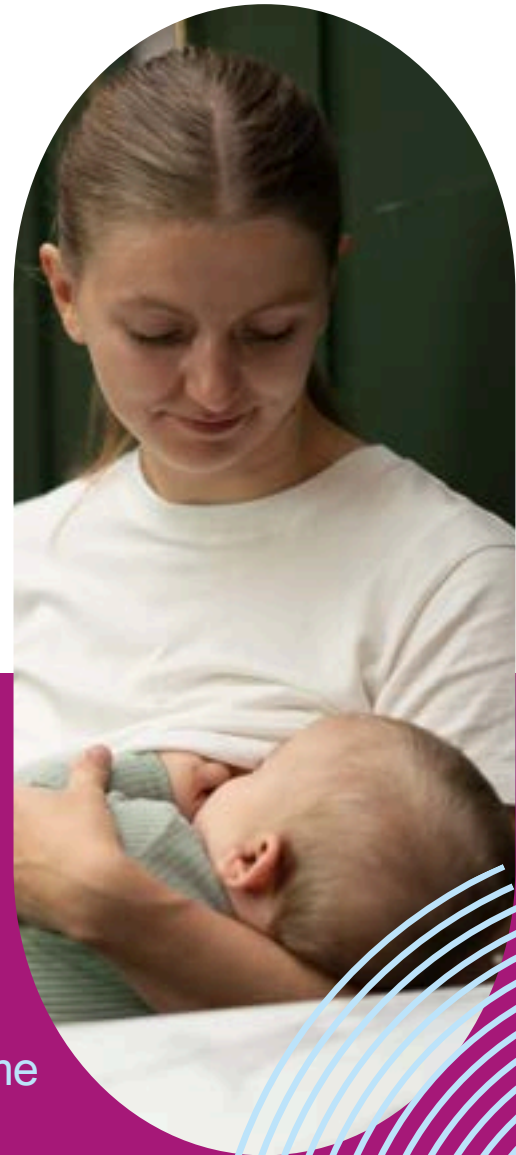
Feedback from a Barnsley mum.

What we ask from you as a Breastfeeding Welcome venue

- Respond sensitively if inappropriate comments are made about breastfeeding in your venue.
- Consider writing a breastfeeding policy for your premises, including staff training on breastfeeding. We can support you with this and are able to offer a training presentation.
- You will support your own staff if they are breastfeeding while in employment.
- Review your Breastfeeding Welcome status every three years.

Two of the most important factors mums appreciate most when breastfeeding out and about are a welcoming atmosphere and supportive staff.

Being part of the Breastfeeding Welcome scheme is about information, education and changing attitudes rather than providing additional facilities. Breastfeeding welcome signage must be displayed in all public venues. Appropriate signage will be provided.



Further information

There is local support available for families living in Barnsley. You can signpost families to these contact details should you need to do so.

0-19 Public Health Nursing Service, Infant Feeding Team

Available Monday to Friday from 9am to 4pm. (Except bank holidays)

Call: 01226 775700

Email: infantfeedingservice@barnsley.gov.uk

Visit our Facebook page: [@BarnsleyInfantFeedingTeam](https://www.facebook.com/BarnsleyInfantFeedingTeam)

0-19 Public Health Nursing Service, Health Visitors

Call: 01226 774411. Available Monday to Thursday 8.45am to 4.45pm and Fridays 8.45am to 4.15pm (except bank holidays).

Email: 0-19healthteam@barnsley.gov.uk

Visit our Facebook page: [@BarnsleyPHNS](https://www.facebook.com/BarnsleyPHNS)

There are other useful organisations that can also offer advice and support:

National Breastfeeding Helpline

Available 24 hours, 365 days a year.

Call: 0300 100 0212

La Leche League:

Available 365 days a year from 8am to 11pm.

Call: 0845 120 2918

How to sign up and what happens next:

You can download and complete the application form below, and submit this to PublicHealthCYP@barnsley.gov.uk. Alternatively, you can contact us to arrange a visit where we will complete the form with you.

Date of application:

Name of organisation:

Type of organisation:

Number of employees:

Contact name:

Contact address:

Postcode:

Telephone number:

Email address:

Website/Social media:

Please tick to agree that by signing up to be part of the Barnsley Breastfeeding Welcome scheme, you are agreeing with your organisation's name being placed on Barnsley Council's website and social media sites.

How to sign up and what happens next:

Once your application form is submitted and approved, we will arrange to send or deliver your breastfeeding welcome pack. This will include a certificate for your venue along with promotional material including the breastfeeding welcome signs and window stickers for you to display.

We will add your details to the Barnsley Breastfeeding Welcome Scheme register, which can be found at **barnsley.gov.uk/InfantFeeding**.

We will signpost all families to this webpage, and we will also arrange photos for promotion on our media channels.

If you have any questions or anything you wish to discuss further you can contact Children and Young Peoples Public Health Team at PublicHealthCYP@barnsley.gov.uk