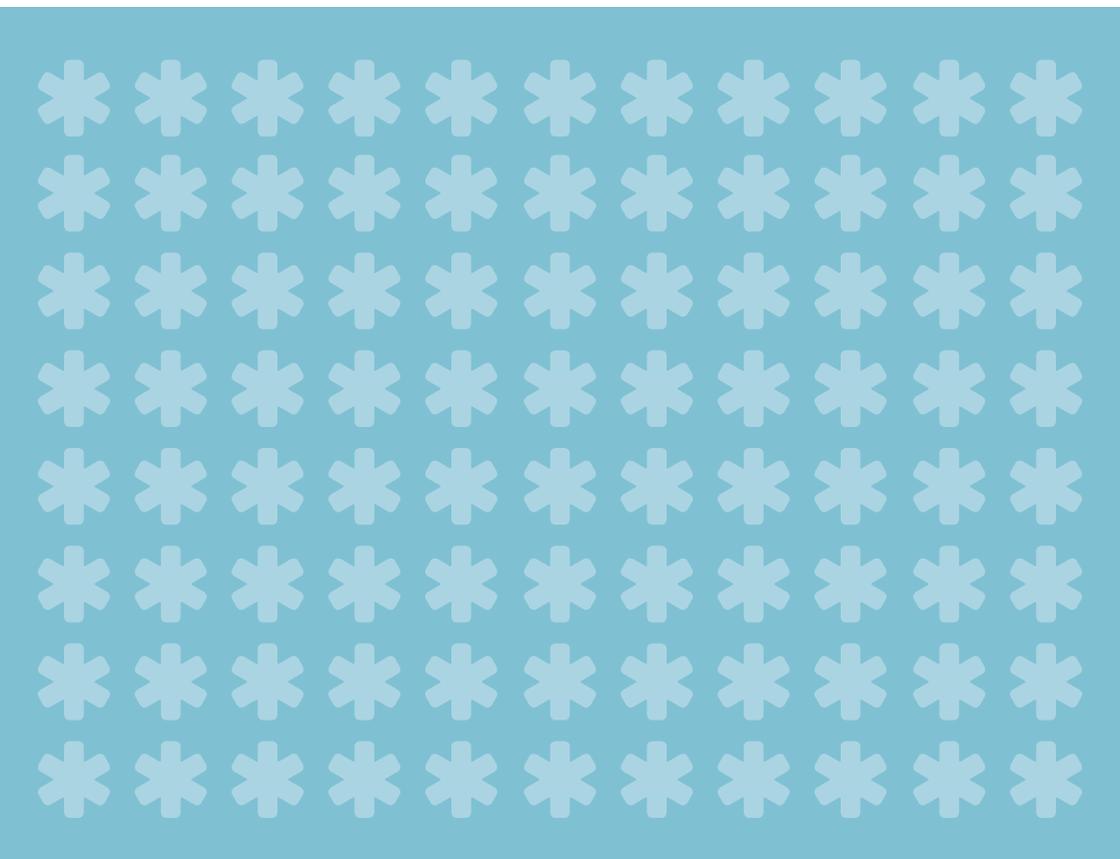




Information guide

Breastfeeding welcome scheme

Register your premises today



Commissioned by



Welcome to your Essex family and child wellbeing services

The Essex 'Breastfeeding Welcome' scheme highlights venues where women can comfortably breastfeed.

What is the scheme?

On average 80% of new mums in Essex start off breastfeeding but many stop shortly after for a variety of reasons. This drops to approximately 50% of new mums continuing to breastfeed when their baby is six to eight weeks old.

Some mums find breastfeeding more challenging when they are away from home. This is one reason why they may stop.

Mums should not be made to feel uncomfortable about breastfeeding in public and they should be given more information and support to do so. In fact, the Equality Act 2010 has made it illegal for anyone to ask a breastfeeding woman to leave a public place such as a café or public transport.

We are inviting your premises to join those already forward-thinking businesses that are participating in the scheme. Any business that is open to the public can join the scheme.

This includes GP practices, schools, cafés, restaurants, hotels, garden centres, libraries, community centres and leisure centres.

Being a Breastfeeding Welcome venue has many benefits for your business and for your customers. It is free to join, easy to register and there are no hidden costs.

Attract breastfeeding mothers

New mums like to meet up regularly with other mums in their community. Word of mouth is a very powerful tool to promote your business. New mums are often out and about at times of the day that your business might usually be quiet. They could potentially help boost your business.

New mums will keep coming back to places where they feel welcome and where staff are friendly, helpful and supportive.

Free publicity

You will receive a Breastfeeding Welcome sticker and certificate. Your business will join the Breastfeeding Welcome venue list, which is available to families on the Virgin Care Essex child and family wellbeing service website.

There is a large culture of word of mouth recommendation between mums, their families and friends. If they are happy with the service you provide, they will recommend you to others.

Register your business today

Staff members who have been made aware of how to be helpful and supportive of breastfeeding mums may also be more welcoming and considerate to other customers. This is likely to improve the service user experience and satisfaction and in turn is likely to be good for your business.

What happens if I join?

It is very easy to make your venue Breastfeeding Welcome. It is free to join and when your business joins the scheme, we ask that you:

- ensure that breastfeeding is welcome in all public areas of your venue;
- are supportive of a mother's right to feed her baby;
- even in the event of a complaint don't ask mothers to move if they are feeding their baby;
- note that some mothers prefer privacy when breastfeeding; if possible provide a quiet or private area for mothers who

request it (this do not have to be another room or space); and

- ensure that all mothers and staff are aware that your business is a member of the scheme and therefore supportive of breastfeeding in your venue by clearly displaying your Breastfeeding Welcome certificate in your venue.

Information for your staff

It is very simple for you and your staff to support breastfeeding mums. Your staff can:

- inform mums that they are welcome to breastfeed in your venue;
- offer a chair, if one is available;
- inform the mother, if you are able that you can provide a private place;
- ask if they need any assistance;
- offer a glass of water to the mother if you are able to; and
- if you work in a venue that serves food and drink, offer to bring their food and drink over to them, or go to the mother and take her order once she has settled her baby.

New members of staff should be made aware of and given the information contained in this leaflet. If you or any of your staff have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact us.

Will customers feel uncomfortable?

You may be concerned that people will be embarrassed or feel uncomfortable if a mum is breastfeeding in your premises.

However, breastfeeding mums are very discreet. There is usually nothing to be seen that should embarrass anyone. Owners and

managers of Breastfeeding Welcome venues have reported not even noticing when mothers were breastfeeding.

Research has shown that 85% of adults have no problem with seeing women breastfeeding in public. In the very rare occurrence that another customer objects to discreet breastfeeding, they should be politely told that the management supports breastfeeding mums, and be given information as to why. Junior staff members may want to refer customers to members of the management team.

Register today

If you would like to join the scheme, you can register your business online or contact 01206 266 891.

Once registered, you will receive your breastfeeding welcome info and promotional material.

Get in touch

Virgin Care is proud to provide your *Essex family and child wellbeing services*.

Virgin Care
Lanswood Park Business Centre
Elmstead Market
Colchester
Essex CO7 7FD

t: 01206 266 891

