

	Policy
	Policy Category: Health and Safety
	Date Reviewed: 10 July 2024
	Policy Name: Breastfeeding Policy

The purpose of this operational policy is to ensure support for women who want to breastfeed children at the centre.

Position Statement

We provide a breast-feeding friendly environment by making available appropriate facilities and warmly welcoming parents to continue with breastfeeding after enrolment at the centre. We aim to promote the health of the baby, young child and mother, to strengthen the bond between them, and support families by helping to ease the mother's transition back to work.

Issue Outline

It is well documented that participation in early childhood services places children at greater risk of infectious illnesses, including respiratory illness. When researchers have compared breastfed to non-breastfed children, it's clear that breastfeeding helps considerably to reduce the severity, incidence and duration of infectious illness for children in group. Breastfeeding has also been linked to improved cognitive performance. Breastfeeding is more than being about nutrition it is about relationships, and supporting attachment also.

Detail

- Mothers may breastfeed children at any time and place within our centre that is comfortable and safe for both mother and child.
- If a mother wants to breastfeed in privacy, any private space that is available can be arranged to be used.
- Children expressing interest in a baby who is breastfeeding will be told that this is the baby's food.
- We will store expressed breast milk in the fridge and warm to correct temperature. All expressed milk must be in a hygienic container and clearly labelled with date and child's name. All children's bottles will be sterilised and labelled with the child's name.
- We discuss with parents, babies and children's eating and drinking patterns and preferences on enrolment.
- Complaints from a parent or visitor about a parent breastfeeding will be listened to respectfully and questions asked if it is not clear what their concern is. They will be informed of our breastfeeding policies.
- We will discuss attitudes to breastfeeding in team meetings from time to time to address any uncomfortableness any teacher may have.

Alignment with Other Policies

- Health & safety policies.

Relevant Background (including legislation/regulation references)

- Te Whāriki 2017
- 69Y Employment Relations (Breaks, Infant Feeding, and Other Matters) Amendment Act 2008
 - An employer must ensure that, so far as is reasonable and practicable in the circumstances,— (a) appropriate facilities are provided in the workplace for an employee who is breastfeeding and who wishes to breastfeed in the workplace; and (b) appropriate breaks are provided to an employee who is breastfeeding and wishes to breastfeed during a work period.
- The Human Rights Commission states that it is unlawful sex-discrimination for women to be prevented from breastfeeding their children in any place where they are otherwise allowed to be (workplaces and public places).
- The World Health Organisation recommends that infants are exclusively breastfed for six months, with timely initiation of adequate, safe and properly fed complementary foods while continuing breastfeeding for up to two years of age or beyond.

Impacts of Policy on Teachers, Parents and Children

Good information, sharing and addressing of concerns, and a welcoming environment are key to making this policy work.

Alignment with the Philosophy

There is alignment with our philosophy.

Implications and/or Risks

- Failure to comply with employment law for infant feeding may result in the Employment Relations Authority issuing a compliance order and a penalty (up to \$10,000).
- Bad publicity for the centre if a parent complains to the authorities or to media about a lack of support.
- Children's health at greater risk.
- Parents not feeling welcomed (e.g. go out to the car to breastfeed; shy about talking with staff of attachment and feeding issues).

Implementation

Teachers are trained in appropriate procedures.

Review

Review annually or when there is a significant change in the area of the policy topic.

Authorised:	
Date:	
Review Date:	
Consultation Undertaken:	Storypark, notice boards foyer and staff room, emailed to RCC Board