BREASTFEEDING POLICY

Breastfeeding is important for infants' nutrition. Australian and international health authorities recommend exclusive breastfeeding until around 6 months. At around 6 months, solid food can then be offered while breastfeeding is continued until 12 months or longer if the mother and baby wish.

Our Service respects and supports mothers' wishes to continue to breastfeed, as we understand that returning to work is a common reason for discontinuing breastfeeding. We provide a welcoming environment for mothers to continue to breastfeed or express breastmilk.

All educators understand their roles and responsibilities to ensure the safe storage and handling of breastmilk and adhere to the feeding practices outlined by families.

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)

QUALITY AREA 2: CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND SAFETY		
2.1.3	Healthy Lifestyles	Healthy eating and physical activity are promoted and appropriate for each child.
QUALITY AREA 6: COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS WITH FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES		
6.2	Collaborative partnerships	Collaborative partnerships enhance children's inclusion, learning and wellbeing

EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL REGULATIONS	
77	Health, hygiene and safe food practices
78	Food and beverages
168	Education and care services must have policies and procedures
170	Policies and Procedures to be followed
171	Policies and procedures to be kept available
172	Notification of change to policies or procedures

RELATED LEGISLATION

Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth)

RELATED POLICIES

Bottle Safety and Preparation Policy Health and Safety Policy	Nutrition and Food Safety Policy Work Health and Safety Policy

PURPOSE

Our Service recognises the importance of breast milk for the developing infant and will ensure that all families are aware of our commitment to supporting mothers to continue to provide their child with breast milk whilst at the Service.

SCOPE

This policy applies to children, families, educators, staff, management, approved provider, nominated supervisor, students, volunteers and visitors of the Service.

IMPLEMENTATION

An important function of breast milk is to provide the mother's antibodies to the infant, assisting in the prevention of illness whilst the immune system is developed. Mothers of infants will be supported to continue to breastfeed, whether by providing expressed breast milk or visiting the Service to feed their child.

THE APPROVED PROVIDER/MANAGEMENT/NOMINATED SUPERVISOR WILL ENSURE:

- educators, staff, students, visitors and volunteers have knowledge of and adhere to this policy
- families are aware of this *Breastfeeding Policy*
- families are provided with breastfeeding information during enrolment and orientation
- the Service is identified as '*Breastfeeding Friendly'* (see Resources section below)
- a quiet, clean, and comfortable place is provided for mothers to comfortably breastfeed or express breast milk
- easily accessible brochures, pamphlets and other resources about breastfeeding are available for families
- staff are aware that it is a mother's legal right to breastfeed
- an individual breastfeeding support plan is developed in consultation with families, including contingency plans for if the Service does not have enough expressed breast milk to meet the child's needs
- literature on the benefits of breastfeeding is updated and distributed to staff as required to support understanding and 'best practice'.

EDUCATORS WILL:

- provide mothers with a private, clean and quiet place to breastfeed their children or express milk
- store and handle expressed breast milk in accordance with the *Bottle Safety and Preparation Policy*
- provide daily information to families regarding infant's feeding intake
- communicate regularly with families about infant and children's feeding patterns and routines
- establish and maintain connections with local breastfeeding support networks, including Victoria health authority and the Australian Breastfeeding Association
- refer mothers with breastfeeding concerns to appropriate resources, including support services offered by Victoria health authority, Australian Breastfeeding Association groups or private lactation consultants.

FAMILIES WILL:

- be informed during orientation of requirements relating to the safe transportation of breast milk between home and the Service, and labelling bottles of breast milk (as per- *Bottle Safety and Preparation Policy)*
- be informed of where they are able to breastfeed or express milk
- be encouraged to communicate regularly with educators about children's bottles and feeding requirements.

STAFF/EDUCATOR TRAINING

Our Service will:

- familiarise new educators and staff with the *Breastfeeding Policy* and offer appropriate training as required, including alternate strategies for feeding if an infant will not accept a bottle
- ensure all educators that have responsibility for the care of infants and children are able to provide basic breastfeeding information and are able to refer mothers with breastfeeding concerns to appropriate resources
- ensure staff encourage parents to develop babies' individual breastfeeding support plans and regularly update their plans, with support from Victoria health authority, Australian Breastfeeding Association groups or private lactation consultants where appropriate
- ensure all educators show due respect and support to mothers who cannot, or do not wish to breastfeed.

SUPPORT FOR EDUCATORS AND STAFF WHO ARE BREASTFEEDING

The Service will:

- not discriminate against women who are breastfeeding
- make all reasonable efforts to support a staff member's request to continue breastfeeding their child
- provide breastfeeding employees with a flexible schedule to allow for breastfeeding or expressing breast milk for their infant
- provide breastfeeding employees with a private, clean and quiet place to breastfeed their infant or express milk.

RESOURCES

Register with the Australian Breastfeeding Association to be recognised as a *Breastfeeding Friendly Early Childhood Education and Care Service* and to access stickers, posters and more.

CHILDCARE CENTRE DESKTOP- RELATED RESOURCES

Bottle Preparation Audit	Breast Milk Preparation Procedure

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT/REFLECTION

The *Breastfeeding Policy* will be evaluated and reviewed on an annual basis or earlier if there are changes to legislation, ACECQA guidance or any incident related to our policy. Feedback will be requested from children, families, staff, educators and management, and notification of any change to policies will be made to families within 14 days.

SOURCES

Australian Breastfeeding Association
Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2026). *Guide to the National Quality Framework*
Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care. National Women's Health Strategy 2020-2030
Australian Government National Health and Medical Research Council. (2013). *Infant feeding guidelines: Information for health workers.*
Education and Care Services National Regulations. (Amended 2025)
National Health and Medical Research Council. (2024). *Staying Healthy: preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services* (6th Ed.). NHMRC. Canberra.
NSW Ministry of Health. (2014). *Caring for children birth to 5 years: Food, nutrition and learning experiences.*
Safe Food and Health Service Executive. (2013). How to prepare your baby's bottle.
State Government Victoria Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (2014). *Promoting Breastfeeding Victorian Breastfeeding Guidelines*
Western Australian Legislation Education and Care Services National Regulations (WA) Act 2012 [for WA services only]

REVIEW

POLICY REVIEWED BY	[NAME] Amy Flockhart	[POSITION] office admin	[DATE] 18/06/2026
POLICY REVIEWED	FEBRUARY 2026	NEXT REVIEW DATE	FEBRUARY 2027
VERSION NUMBER	V11.02.26		
MODIFICATIONS	• annual policy maintenance • sources checked for currency and updated as required		

POLICY REVIEWED	PREVIOUS MODIFICATIONS	NEXT REVIEW DATE
FEBRUARY 2025	• annual policy maintenance • sources checked for currency and updated as required • Childcare Centre Desktop resources section added	FEBRUARY 2026