



Developing a culture of breastfeeding within the school setting:

A guide for primary and secondary school teachers

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Introduction

There is an association between breastfeeding, cognitive ability and improved educational attainment.

Exclusive breastfeeding for six months and beyond is associated with short and long-term health benefits for children. It provides a protective factor against gastroenteritis tummy upsets, ear and respiratory infections long after breastfeeding has ceased, and therefore children who are breastfed are less likely to have time off school as a result of these ailments.

Breastfeeding promotes natural appetite control and, as a result, can reduce the likelihood of a child becoming overweight or obese later in life. It also reduces the likelihood of associated conditions such as diabetes and heart disease in adults.

Research suggests that girls make a decision about whether to breastfeed before they leave school. We all have a role to play in increasing breastfeeding rates.

Facts about breastfeeding in the North West region

The Northwest region has some of the lowest breastfeeding rates in England.

- During 2013/14, only 63.3% of women in the Northwest start to breastfeed at birth. The England average was 74%.
- In some areas within the region, only 33% of women attempt.
- At six months, only two out of ten women across the region are breastfeeding.

Facts about breastfeeding in Halton

In Halton, 51.6% of women start to breastfeed at birth with the Merseyside average being 53.4%. In 2013/14, breastfeeding in Halton at 6-8 weeks was significantly lower at 21.8% than the England average of 46%. The Merseyside average was 26.5%.



The benefits of breastfeeding throughout Halton

The following table summarises the short and long-term benefits of breastfeeding.

Health benefits of breastfeeding for babies	Health benefits to mothers	Additional Benefits
<p>Smaller chance of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> developing eczema, asthma and other allergies getting ear and chest infections, enteritis and tummy bugs being fussy about new foods being constipated urinary infections being obese and developing conditions such as diabetes, heart disease and high blood pressure when they are older sudden death syndrome (cot death) tooth decay, jaw and teeth deformity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> lower risk of breast and ovarian cancer lower risk of osteoporosis and hip fractures (promotion of additional calcium) helps to maintain a balanced weight - breastfeeding naturally burns up to about 500 extra calories a day, so mums who breastfeed often find it easier to lose their pregnancy weight. Breastfeeding also promotes natural appetite control for life 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> saves money: formula feeding can cost as much as £45 per month environmentally friendly convenience - 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

Links to Healthy Schools

Health & Wellbeing Priority	Actions for contributing to the increase of breastfeeding rates in Halton
Healthy Weight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Through the taught curriculum, ensure that children and young people have a clear understanding about the purpose of breastfeeding through life process and healthy lifestyles. The school may provide a staff INSET from the local Infant Feeding Coordinator to increase staff knowledge about external support and development of the school's approach towards breastfeeding.
Emotional Health and Wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children and young people will become aware of societal, cultural and media influence affecting breastfeeding choices, i.e body image, family and friends, and formula milk advertising. Staff will become increasingly confident toward informal and formal way of teaching about the benefits of breastfeeding. Children and young people recognise that breastfeeding is the biological norm for feeding a baby. Information is provided and available for parents/carers about the welcoming environment for breastfeeding. Stigma and barriers towards breastfeeding staff and parents are removed.
Keeping safe and risk-taking behaviours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase the number of young people who recognise the positive and safe benefits that breastfeeding achieves. The school environment welcomes breastfeeding by providing safe and accommodating facilities (Baby Welcome Award). The benefits of breastfeeding are promoted and displayed appropriately throughout the school setting, i.e parent/carer noticeboard, newsletter and website. (SRE) for KS3 and KS4 will include the benefits of how to parent positively.

Breastfeeding in the PSHE Curriculum

Learning outcomes by the end of this Key stage:		Links to Science Curriculum
Foundation	<p>Most children will: Have an understanding of how mothers feed their babies</p> <p>All children will: Have an awareness of breastfeeding</p> <p>Links to QCA 3d) About the process of growing from young to old and how people's needs change 3e) The names of the main parts of the body</p>	N/A
Key stage 1	<p>Most children will: Understand how mothers breastfeed their babies</p> <p>All children will: Know that all mothers produce milk from their breast for babies</p> <p>Links to QCA 3d) About the process of growing from young to old and how people's needs change 3e) The names of the main parts of the body</p>	2.2b That humans and other animals need food and water to stay alive
Key stage 2	<p>Most children will: Understand why mothers choose to breastfeed their babies</p> <p>All children will: Know that the female body changes in order to prepare for breastfeeding</p> <p>1a) To talk and write about their opinions, and explain their views on issues that affect themselves and society 1d) To recognise, as they approach puberty, how people's emotions change and how to deal with feelings towards their families and others in a positive way 3c) About how the body changes as they approach puberty 5i) Prepare for change</p>	2.1a Pupils should be taught that life processes common to humans and other animals include nutrition, movement and reproduction
Key Stage 3	<p>Most pupils will: Know and understand the specific nutritional and health benefits of breastfeeding</p> <p>All pupils will: Recognise the factors that influence a mother's decision to breastfeed Understand the health benefits of breastfeeding to mother and baby</p> <p>Key Concept: Healthy Lifestyles: a) Recognising that healthy lifestyles, and the wellbeing of self and others, depend on information and making responsible choices</p>	3.3c Conception, growth, development, behaviour and health can be affected by diet, drugs and disease
Key Stage 4	<p>Most pupils will: Be able to present an argument for and against breastfeeding</p> <p>Key Concept: Healthy Lifestyles: a) Recognising that healthy lifestyles, and the wellbeing of self and others, depend on information and making responsible choices</p>	5e Human health is affected by a range of environmental and inherited factors, by the use and misuse of drugs and by medical treatments