

	<p><b>Policy Category:</b> <b>HEALTH AND SAFETY</b></p>
	<p><b>Policy Name:</b> <b>Breastfeeding Policy</b></p>

## Purpose

The purpose of this operational policy is to ensure support breastfeeding among our staff and whānau who want to breastfeed their children at the centre.

## Position Statement

Our Centre provides a breastfeeding friendly environment by making available appropriate spaces and practices that warmly welcomes and enables staff and parents of children attending the Centre. We aim to promote the health of the infant, young child, and mother, and wish to support and promote breastfeeding.

## Issue Outline

Breastfeeding while working is protected in New Zealand Aotearoa through the Employment Relations Act 2000. The Act specifies that employers have to give breastfeeding breaks and appropriate facilities for employees who want to breastfeed or express milk for their babies at work or during the working day, if this is reasonable and realistic in the circumstances (taking into consideration the employer's operational environment and resources). The breaks are unpaid and in addition to rest and meal breaks (unless the employee and employer agree otherwise). If employers don't do this, the Employment Relations Authority could make them comply or apply a penalty.

Breastfeeding leads to reduction in illness and improved health, for the mother and the child (Ministry of Health). The Ministry of Health recommends all babies to be exclusively breastfed to around six months, and then continue to breastfeed for at least a year longer if desired. Early Childhood settings such as our Centre are instrumental in supporting mothers to continue breastfeeding, as returning to work is one of the most common reasons for discontinuing breastfeeding.

## Detail

Education and awareness:

- All staff are familiar with this policy and parents are made aware of it upon enrolment.
- Our Centre provides commercial-free information about breastfeeding for staff and families.

- If parents or visitors have concerns about someone breastfeeding we will consider their concern and explain the Centre's commitment to its breastfeeding policy.
- Children attending our Centre are exposed to the normalcy of breastfeeding through books, posters, discussions and through seeing breastfeeding in the Centre. If they express an interest in a baby who is breastfeeding they will be informed that this is the baby's best food.

#### **Environment:**

- We provide a warm, comfortable, culturally appropriate space for staff and parents to breastfeed their children, with access to privacy. However, as a rule, mothers may breastfeed children at any time and place within our Centre that is comfortable and safe for both mother and child.

#### **Practices:**

- We discuss with parents, babies and children's eating and drinking patterns and preferences on enrolment.
- Breastfed babies are fed according to their feeding plan.
- We will store expressed breast milk in the fridge for up to two days or in the freezer for up to three months and warmed to correct temperature using warm water. All expressed milk must be in a hygienic container and clearly labelled with the date and the child's name. All children's bottles will be sterilised and labelled with the child's name.

### **Alignment with Other Policies**

- While there is no specific ECE Licensing Criteria relating to breastfeeding, we will apply, in broad terms, HS19 and HS20.

### **Relevant Background (including legislation/regulation references)**

- Employment Relations Act 2000, 69Y: [Employer's obligation](#)
- An employer must ensure that, so far as is reasonable and practicable in the circumstances,—
- appropriate facilities are provided in the workplace for an employee who is breast-feeding and who wishes to breastfeed in the workplace; and
- appropriate breaks are provided to an employee who is breast-feeding and wishes to breastfeed during a work period.

### **Impacts of Policy on Staff, Parents, Children**

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

### **Alignment with the Centre Philosophy**

This policy ensures a safe environment, a crucial part of creating and maintaining the well-being of children in our care.

## 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 breast-feed; shy about talking with staff of attachment and feeding issues).

## Implementation

Staff are informed about the policy and trained in all relevant feeding routines.

## Review

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

<b>Authorised by licensed service:</b>	Greendale Kids Preschool Greendale Kids Nursery
<b>Date:</b>	14 January 2025
<b>Review Date:</b>	November 2026
<b>Parents informed:</b>	May 2025