

Bottle Feeding and Preparation Policy

Reviewed: August 2025 **Next Review:** August 2026

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Our Values

At Young Friends, we approach infant feeding with care, safety, and sensitivity — always prioritising secure attachments, respectful practice, and health protection.

- **Sustainability** – We reduce waste and use safe, long-life storage methods
- **Respect** – Babies are fed in a calm, responsive way, with warmth and comfort
- **Authenticity** – Feeding is not rushed or routine-led, but based on real connection
- **Supportive Leadership** – Staff are trained, supported and monitored in correct procedures
- **Community** – Families' feeding choices are welcomed and supported without judgement

Policy Statement

This policy outlines how we store, prepare, feed and clean bottles safely and respectfully in line with NHS, Food Standards Agency and EYFS guidelines. We recognise the significance of feeding time for bonding, nutrition and early brain development.

Purpose

- To safeguard babies from illness, infection or unsafe handling
- To ensure consistency in feeding routines for each child
- To provide clear procedures for sterilisation, preparation and feeding
- To support close emotional connection and calm transitions between home and nursery

Applicability

This policy applies to:

- All babies and toddlers using bottles (formula or expressed milk)
- All staff responsible for feeding and sterilisation
- Parents and families

Breastmilk

Expressed breastmilk must be:

- Labelled with child's full name and date/time expressed
 - Supplied in sterilised bottles or sterile pouches
 - Stored in the fridge at **below 5°C**
 - Milk is gently warmed in a bottle warmer
 - Bottles are discarded after **1 hour** of initial warming
 - Parents are encouraged to bring milk in **insulated bags** with ice packs if transporting long distances
 - Mothers are welcome to breastfeed onsite in a calm, private space if desired
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Formula Milk – Powdered

We follow **NHS Start4Life** and **Food Standards Agency** guidance

Parents provide:

- Measured pots of formula
 - Bottles sterilised and labelled
 - Feeding plan including number and timing of feeds Formula is:
 - Made fresh using a flask of hot water (above 70°C)
 - Cooled to a safe temperature before feeding
 - Discarded after 1 hour
 - Only ever prepared by trained and designated staff
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Ready-Made Formula

- Parents may provide unopened cartons or bottles of pre-mixed formula
- Staff decant the formula into a sterilised bottle if needed

Once opened, it is:

- Stored in the fridge (below 5°C)
 - Used within 2 hours or as per manufacturer instructions
 - Bottles are labelled and dated immediately on opening
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Bottle Feeding Procedure

1. Staff check child's name, time, formula/milk type, and temperature
2. Baby is held **cradled in arms**, with **eye contact, no distractions**
3. Bottles are not propped or left with the child
4. Babies are burped gently and offered comfort throughout

Staff record:

- Time of feed
 - Amount taken
 - Any issues or changes
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Sterilising and Hygiene

All bottles are **washed and sterilised** after use

We use:

- Milton cold water steriliser or
 - Steam steriliser, depending on bottle type and staff training
 - Staff check for wear and tear (cracks, warped teats) and notify parents
 - Sterilised bottles are stored in clean, sealed containers until use
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Feeding Plans and Records

- Each child has a feeding plan agreed with parents
- We accommodate routine changes where possible

Daily records include:

- Time of feed
- Type and amount
- Notes on behaviour, sleep or concerns
- Updates are shared via Family and in-person conversations

Allergies and Medical Needs

- All milk types and allergies are checked at registration
- If a baby uses **prescribed milk**, we request a GP letter and store securely
- Staff handling prescribed feeds are briefed individually and documented

Supervision and Staff Role

Only **named, trained staff** feed babies

Staff feeding more than one baby must:

- Be supervised
- Feed one child at a time
- Clean hands and prepare area between feeds

Staff may not feed a baby unless:

- They have ensured the bottle has been checked
- The bottle is labelled clearly
- They are not managing other tasks simultaneously

Waste and Sustainability

- Leftover milk is discarded after 1 hour
- Parents are encouraged to bring **reusable containers** and low-waste supplies
- Bottles are sent home each evening for deep cleaning by families

Linked Policies

- Weaning and Nutrition
- Health and Safety
- Medication and Allergies
- Key Person Policy
- Daily Routines and Sleep