



My Neonatal Journal

Developing Parental Skills In NICU





Elsdon Neonatal Unit Welcomes You To Our Unit

Here at Basildon Elsdon Neonatal unit, we would like to congratulate you on the birth of your baby; this is one of the most exciting things that can happen to your family. However, things may not go as planned and your baby may need to take a detour to our Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU). We understand this can be a very difficult experience for you and the nurses are here to support you all along the way. On NICU we encourage families/caregivers to be true partners in their baby's care, such as changing nappies, feeding and participating in the ward round. All of these can be achieved with the help and support from all the NICU staff. If you have any specific questions or concerns in relation to your baby, please speak to your baby's nurse who will be happy to help. This journal has been created to give you a better understanding of neonatal care and to settle into the routines of a neonatal unit. The information written here reflects the common development pathway of premature and sick babies. However, every baby's journey may be different. Remember even the smallest of babies are the strongest of fighters.

QR code below will show you a virtual tour of our unit.



Contact Numbers	0300 443 0341
Location	Level A Maternity wing Elsdon NICU
Parking	Ask nurse for a car park permit
Visiting time for relatives	Parents have unrestricted 24 hour access.
Ward round	From 09:30 am weekdays 10:30 am at weekends





What Can You Do?



Become familiar with the layout of the unit and the hospital.



Bring belongings for your baby such as nappies, cotton wool or wipes, clothes, blankets and muslins. If your chosen method of feeding is via a bottle – please provide us with any bottles you have purchased.

Ask your nurse about expressing - we will support you with breastfeeding.

Carry out skin to skin (kangaroo care) with your baby (Dads too!!).



Containment holding to comfort your baby (ask your nurse if unsure).

Participate in the changing of your baby's nappies and giving top and tail washes when appropriate for your baby.



Your baby may be taking feeds through a tube in their nose. You can be taught how to do this if you wish. (Optional)

Parents can be present during ward rounds, advocate for their baby as well as being involved in decision making and understanding your babies cues.



Fill in the daily diary section of this journal. When you may feel that some days are tougher- take a read back on some of your earlier entries and see how well you baby has blossomed and progressed!





My Baby Label

My name is.....

Hospital where I was born.....

My gestation at birth.....

My birth weight.....

My named consultant.....

My method of arrival.....

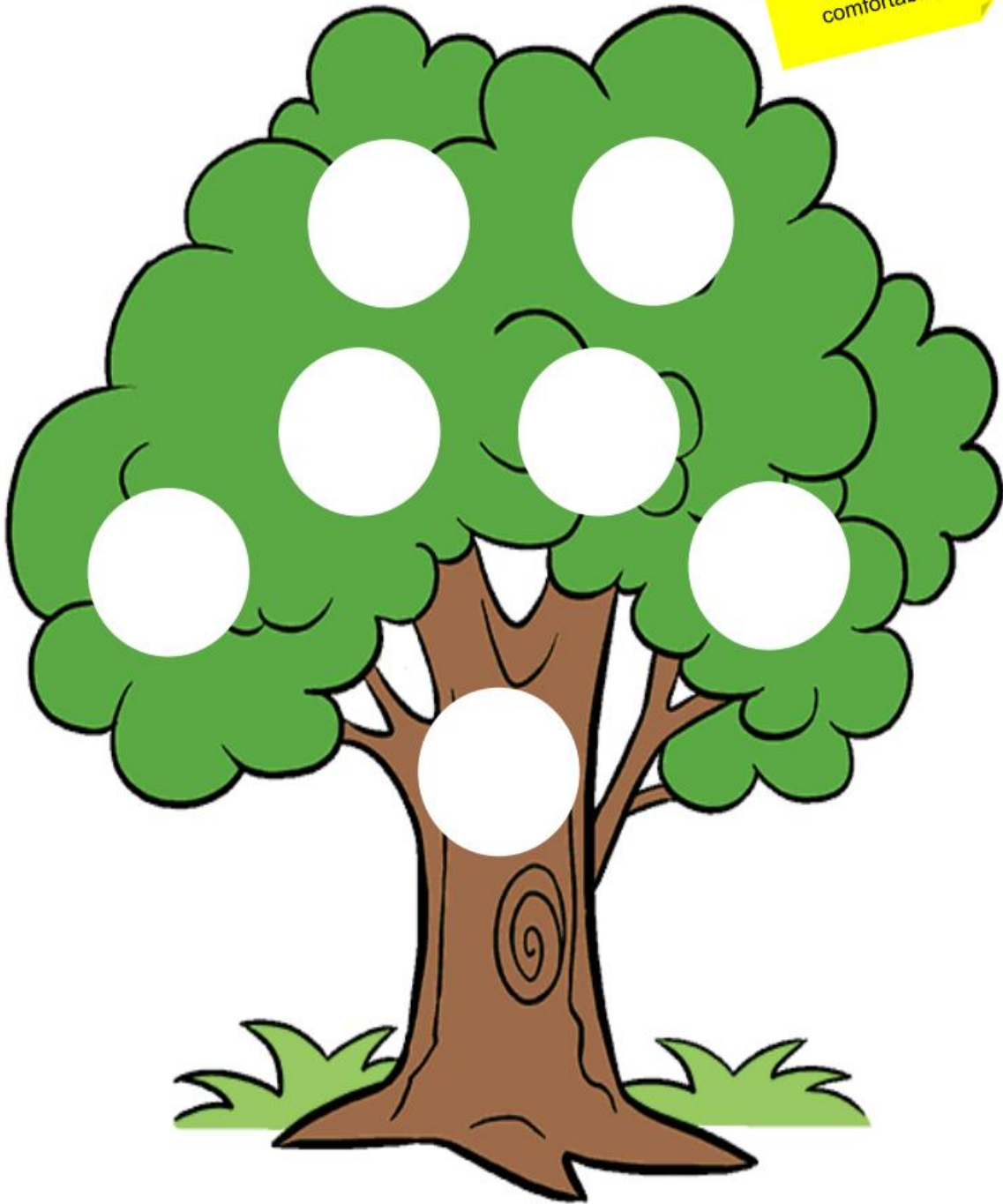
    





OUR *family* TREE

Please write any
name preferences
down! The health
professionals want
you to feel
comfortable.





Visiting Time

Parents and Siblings: 24 hour Access

Maximum of two adults (over 16 years) per family at the cot side (one must be a parent)

Siblings are welcome and aren't counted in the numbers

Please respect the babies need for a peaceful, restful environment by the following:

- Only parents and siblings to carry out positive touch/cuddles/cares
- Choose people from your close support network
- Please do not allow them to visit if they feel unwell
- Keep conversations quiet on the unit

Visitors may be asked to leave if the unit is busy, procedures are being undertaken or ward round is taking place.

We would like to ask you to help us keep other parents, visitors, babies, and staff safe from any infection that may be brought onto the unit and spread by touch. The babies on NICU, regardless of their age and gestation, are vulnerable from catching infection due to being premature or sick. Sick newborn and premature babies are at a very high risk of having an infection due to their underdeveloped immune system.

REMEMBER: This is a time for you to bond with your baby. You can take photos however we ask for you not to take phone calls or use your mobile when you are cuddling your baby. Take a minute to look and adore your new bundle of joy!





Hand Washing Saves Lives

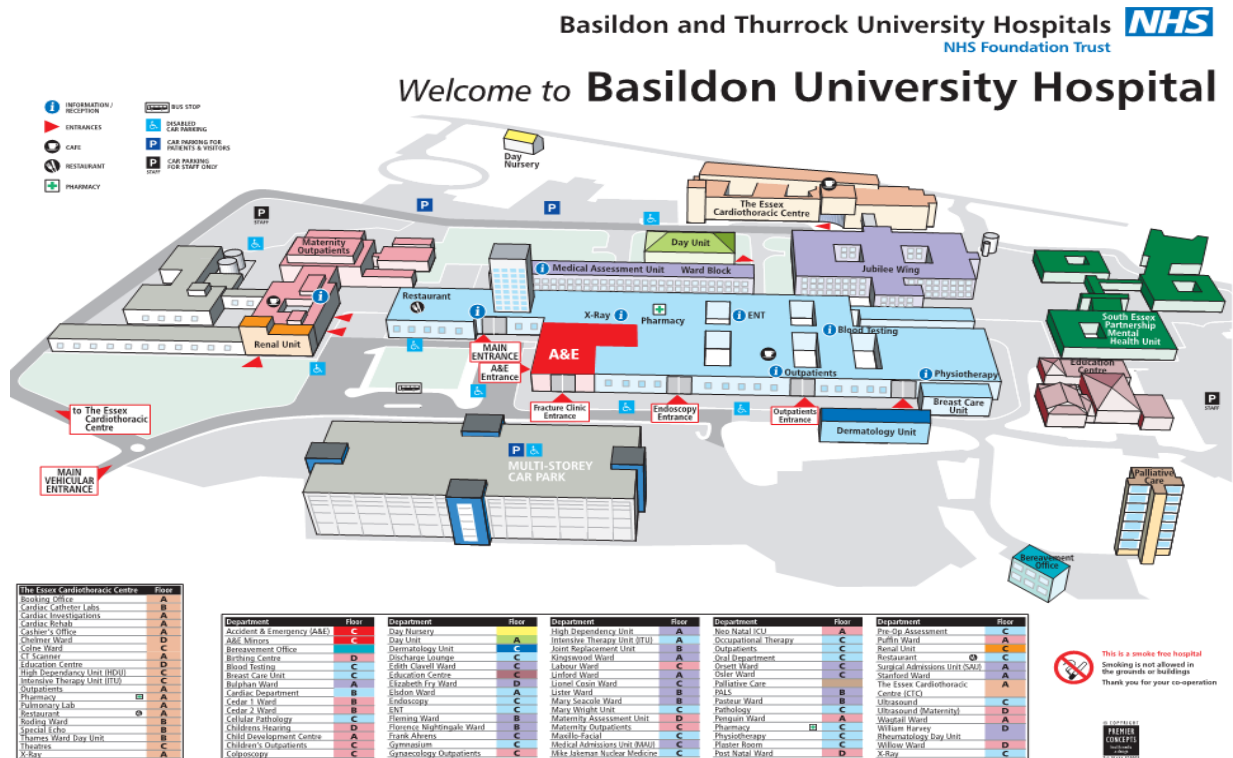
This is the single most important factor in preventing the spread of infection as it physically removes 99% of bacteria and viruses from the hands. Using hand sanitiser following hand washing reduces the bacteria and viruses even further, up to 99.9%.

We ask that you follow the advice below to help reduce any risks:

Upon entering Unit	Outdoor coats/fleeces/jackets need to be removed and placed in the parents sitting room
Handwashing	Wash your hands at the sink at the entry of the unit Please see QR code for further information, located on the hand towel dispenser We encourage bare below the elbow
At the cot side	- On entering and before leaving the bay your baby is in - Before and after touching your baby - After touching your baby's surroundings, which needs to be kept clean and tidy to aid effective daily cleaning - After nappy changes - Before feeding your baby - Before exiting the unit Please keep the area around your baby tidy with things you bring in for your baby, as this will aid effective cleaning of the area to reduce the risk of the environment from harbouring bacteria
Visitors	2 people allowed at cot side at any given time Siblings should remain with you at the cot side and not wander around the unit. They should also be encouraged to wash their hands as you would
Leaving the unit	Wash hands
Sickness	If you or your visitors/family are unwell, please call the unit before visiting your baby



Hospital Information



Maternity League of Friends:

09:00-13:00 Monday to Friday

Hot and cold drinks, filled rolls and snacks

Main Hospital Restaurant:

Breakfast: 07.30-10.30am Monday to Sunday

Lunch: 11.45 – 14:00 Monday to Friday; 12:00-16:30 Saturday and Sunday

Dinner: 17:30-20:00 Monday to Friday; 17:00-20:00 Saturday and Sunday

Range of hot and cold foods including sandwiches, fruit and snacks

The coffee bar in the main restaurant is open 07:30-20:00 serving drinks and snacks





In the main foyer there is now a

WH SMITH 06:00- 20:00 (Monday – Friday), 07:00 – 19:00 (Saturday- Sunday)

M&S (07:00 – 21:00) Monday – Sunday)

Stockshop clothes shop (09:00 – 17:00) Monday – Friday and (11:00 – 16:00) Saturday,
CLOSED Sunday,

Costa Coffee (06:00 – 20:00) Monday to Friday, (07:00 – 19:00) Saturday and Sunday) and
post office (08:30 – 17:30) Monday – Friday, (09:00 – 14:00) Saturday and Sunday.

Main Outpatients League of Friends:

10:00-15:00 Monday to Thursday; 10:00-13:00 on Friday

Hot and cold drinks, filled rolls and snacks

Costa Coffee: 07.30am-18:00pm Monday to Friday; 9.30am-18:00pm Saturday and Sunday in
CTC Building Hot and cold drinks, sandwiches and toasted sandwiches

Public Car Park: You may be entitled to a parking pass. Please speak to a nurse who will sort
this out for you.





Travel Information

By car:

From A13

Take the A176 turn off (Five Bells roundabout).

Take the Basildon exit (follow the hospital A&E sign).

Continue on this road. Basildon University Hospital is on your left-hand side.

From A127

Take the Basildon (A176) turn off towards Basildon Town Centre.

The route to the hospital is clearly marked with red hospital A&E signs.

From A12

Take the A130 turn off towards Basildon.

Continue on the A130 until it merges onto the A13.

Take the A176 turn off (Five Bells roundabout).

Take the Basildon exit (follow the hospital A&E sign).

Continue on this road.

Basildon University Hospital is on your left-hand side.



By taxi service:

A&B Taxi service Number: 01268 555555

Ace Taxi Services Number: 01268 532532

Value cars Taxi Service Number: 01268 525252

United Taxi Services Number: 01268 411141



By Bus: (Bus stop is opposite the multi-storey car park by A+E)

Number 374 goes to Chelmsford

Number 100 goes to Thurrock

Number 10 goes to Shopgate / Wickford

Number B2 goes to Laindon Railway Station

Number 25 goes to Basildon Bus Station to Southend

Number 5a/5b goes to Pitsea via Whitmore Way and Felmores

The Basildon train station is in the Town Centre. Address is Station Way, Basildon, SS16 5XY





Things To Do



Present at ward round

Yes / no



To be contacted overnight

Yes / no



To read to my baby

Yes / no



Change my clothes

Yes / no / assistance



Change my nappy

Yes / no / assistance



Give a bath

Yes / no / assistance



Get baby out

Yes / no / assistance



Feeding me

Yes / no / assistance





What Can You Do To Help?.

Your baby will be nursed in an incubator for various reasons depending on their situation. Your nurse will explain how the incubator works. We can also use incubators to isolate babies with infections, you will be informed if this is the case.

There will be times when a sterile procedure is being performed in the bay where your baby is, and there is a possibility you may be asked to leave the room temporarily to reduce the risk of contamination.

All staff are trained in infection control and prevention. If you are unsure if a member of staff has washed their hands, please do not hesitate to ask them and if you have any concerns please speak to the Nurse in Charge.

Help us create a healing environment:

Noise reduction	Phone calls are not encouraged by the cot side
Reducing Light	You will find we use incubator covers to reduce exposure to too much light, this helps reduce stress
Cuddles	As your baby is vulnerable, we would advise to restrict cuddles to parents only, until baby is discharged home

Neonatal Skin Care: A Parent's Guide

Objective

To promote and maintain healthy skin and help to prevent skin breakdown and soreness.

Basic Information

Neonatal skin is virtually sterile at birth. However, it is fragile and susceptible to irritation and becoming sore within the first 2-4 weeks of life.

In all babies, regardless of the gestation, the skin can take 2-7 days to produce its own secretion shield (called the acid mantle) that will help to protect the skin, the timing of this will depend on the initial gestation.

In the 3rd trimester vernix develops to cover the skin, this is a white, thick, creamy substance that moisturizes the skin. It has antioxidant and anti-bacterial properties.

This will not develop in babies born below 28 weeks. That means that preterm infants are more prone to skin irritation and breakdown.





All babies should have their skin checked regularly during cares, washing and bathing for dryness and sore areas, particularly the nappy and the cord area.

The mouth should look pink and moist, white spots on the tongue that are persistent and not going away could indicate thrush (candida) and may need treatment.

Skin Cleansing	Babies should not be bathed until the baby is stable. They can however have short washes. Please speak to the nurse looking after your baby for any advice
Bathing	Bathing only needs to happen 2-3 times a week, a wash is sufficient between baths. This helps to maintain the protective skin acid mantle which in turn helps to reduce the risk of skin irritation and breakdown. When bathing the baby, the room should be warm and free from draughts from doors and windows. After a wash or bath make sure the cord area is dry. If the area is red around the umbilicus, it may indicate infection. Please see your midwife/health visitor/GP for advice
Suitable Products	Water only for a minimum of 4 weeks in premature infants. Water wipes can be used after 2 weeks in term infants. Simple non-fragrant neutral pH creams and products can be used after 2-4 weeks. Minimal use of water-based emollients after 4 weeks to moisturize the skin. Sunflower seed oil after 4 weeks.
Not Suitable For Newborn Skin	Any creams, bath products containing lanolin, zinc, medicated products should be avoided as they can cause more irritation
Oils	Oils including essential oils before 4 weeks increase the risk of atopic eczema. Oils should not be used on infants under phototherapy lights due to a risk of skin interactions from the lights.
Nappy Area	The use of good quality, fluid absorbing nappies are recommended to keep moisture away from the skin. Excessive moisture will cause skin irritation and possible soreness.





	It may be necessary to put a protective barrier on the nappy area. A simple non-fragrant, pH neutral barrier cream may be sufficient.
Infants On Oxygen	Use paraffin free products. Any other product including paraffin-based products can cause a potential fire risk with the use of oxygen.

Participation In Care

What to bring for your baby	• Nappies - ask the nurse what size you would need • Cotton wool • Wipes to be used after 2 weeks • Muslins • Blankets • Bonding squares • Clothes • Please avoid any extra toys or comforters as they take up space
ASK nurse to help you with the following	• Mouthcare • Top and tail • How to change nappy • How to feed baby via nasogastric tube • How to wash your breastmilk expressing kit • Breastfeeding • Bottle feeding • Kangaroo care • Bath demonstration • Rooming in with your baby
Other services provided By NICU	• Occupational therapist • Physiotherapist • Speech and Language therapist • Dietician • Psychologist





23 - 27 WEEKS



Talk quietly and gently to me. I can hear your voice and it comforts me.

My skin is very thin and transparent. My blood vessels may be seen through my skin. Please be gentle with me as I may bruise easily.

I may appear hairy-this is known as *lanugo*. It helps keep me warm outside the womb.



I may sleep all the time. When I am sleeping, I am growing. This resembles what I would be doing in my Mummy's tummy.

I may startle at loud noises and bright lights, please try to keep it dark for me while I develop and grow.





Retrieval Team

Here at Basildon, we are a general hospital, bounded by guidelines, policies and protocols.

A baby born between 23 and 27 weeks gestation, will need to travel to another destination.

PANDR are known as our transport crew, transferring babies is what they do.

Your baby when ready will return, with even more for you to learn.

This NICU journey teaches you, all the different things you can do.

Please don't be scared to ask questions, or help us improve with your suggestions.

From the team at Basildon NICU





28 - 32 weeks



I may be learning to suckle. You may see me sucking on my feeding tube. You can speak to my nurse about non-nutritive sucking and how I may benefit from this.

I may be able to recognise your face and smell when I am having cuddles.



I may be able to keep my eyes open for a short period. The light is still too bright so make sure the incubator cover remains in place.

My movements may appear jerky or I may startle at times. Please try not to knock on my incubator. I will be able to grasp my hands – watch out for my feeding tube!

I still need help with supporting my body. I need a nest to help me push against boundaries to strengthen my muscles.





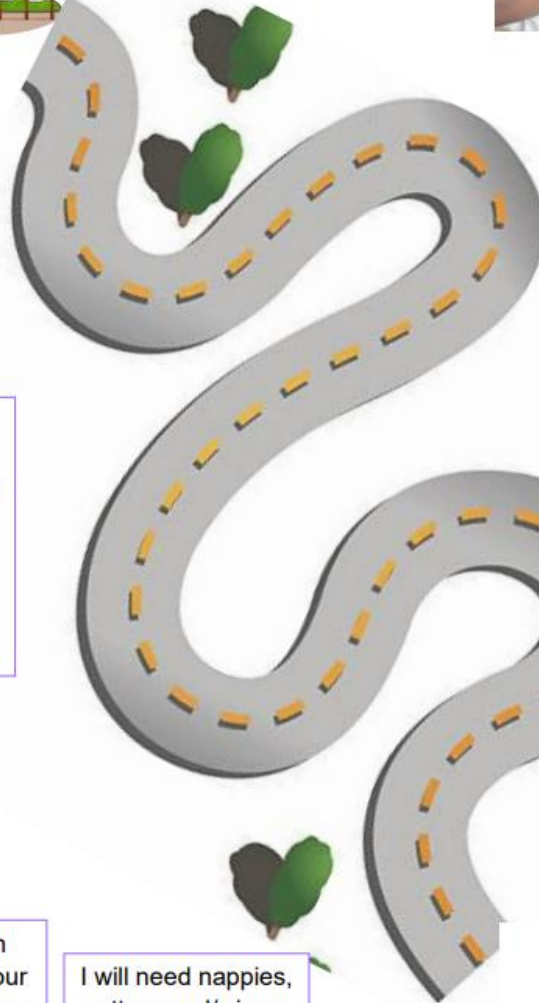
33 - 37 weeks

I may want to be held more. Ask how you can learn your baby's cues and how to respond to them. If you aren't confident in getting your baby out, ask your nurse to support you or demonstrate this.



I will be showing sleep and wake cycles. I will cry when I am hungry or when my nappy needs changing.

Please provide a calm and relaxing environment when you are feeding me. I need to be able to concentrate on sucking, swallowing and breathing.



You can start offering me the oral feeds. I will need to help establish a safe suck swallow and breathing reflex. The nurses will be beside you to support you.



Try to spend as much time as you can with your baby. You can arrange an overnight stay with your baby. Please speak to the nurse looking after your baby.

I will need nappies, cotton wool/wipes, clothes and bottles depending on how I am feeding.





Basic Life Support Demonstration (BLS)

Having a BLS demonstration can help you be more prepared to care for your premature or sick baby after leaving the neonatal unit.

The thought of having to resuscitate your baby can be very scary and is something that no parent or carer ever wants to have to do or think about. But the training is designed to help you be as prepared as possible.

Below is a link you may wish to copy which leads you to the Bliss website which has lots of useful information for parents including a video demonstrating BLS.



<https://www.bliss.org.uk/parents/going-home-from-the-neonatal-unit/preparing-to-go-home-from-the-neonatal-unit/resuscitation-training>

Feedback Parents and Carers

- Please could you spend a few moments completing a quick NICU feedback survey?
- The information you feedback to us is vital for us to assess what we are doing well and what we could improve on.
- The survey is completely anonymous, but of course you may leave your name if you wish.
- Just open your camera on your phone and hover over the QR code below.

Your opinion matters and we really appreciate your time.





BLISS- QR Codes		
Looking After Your Mental Health on The Neonatal Unit		
What Is Family-Centred Care?		
Your Baby Your Family		
Support For You and Your Family		
Looking After Your Baby on The Neonatal Unit		
Repatriation- Transfer to or Back From Another Hospital.		
Virtual Tour of Basildon Elsdon NICU Ward		

All the staff on NICU would like to thank you for your co-operation in keeping your baby and everyone on NICU safe. Please speak to the Nurse in Charge if you have any concerns.





Log

Date:	Corrected gestation:
NICU day:	Current weight:
Professionals:	
Doctor:	Nurse:
Other (Physios, OT, Dietician):	
Feeding:	Expressing log:
Equipment:	Procedures:
Ups:	Downs:
What we have done today:	Any questions I want to know/ ask?





Basildon NICU Number:	0300 433 0341
Basildon NeoMates Facebook page:	NeoMatesBasildon
Basildon Hospital Breastfeeding Facebook support:	Feeding together Email: FeedingTogether@btuh.nhs.uk
BLISS Organisation	Website: www.bliss.org.uk Contact Number: 020 7378 1122 Email: hello@bliss.org.uk
Lullaby Trust	Website: www.lullabytrust.org.uk Smart phone App: The Lullaby Trust Baby Check
The Rainbow Trust	Website: www.rainbowtrust.org.uk Mobile Number: 07825601367 Telephone Number: 01372 583273
Start for life: Breastfeeding	https://www.nhs.uk/start4life/baby/feeding-your-baby/breastfeeding/
Breastfeeding hub	Accessed via mobile app.
First Steps Nutrition Trust	www.firststepsnutrition.org
Start for Life Bottle-Feeding guide [available via]:	Accessible by: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/start4life-updated-guide-to-bottle-feeding
Best beginnings (Baby Buddy)	Website: www.bestbeginnings.org.uk Smart phone app: 'baby buddy'

