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Press Release: Surrey mothers receive outstanding support and advice on infant feeding

Surrey mothers will be re-assured that they can continue to feed with their infants with confidence knowing that the support they receive from health visitors is of the highest quality.

All health visiting teams at Children and Family Health Surrey have received Level 3 accreditation by Unicef UK. This accreditation is a nationally recognised mark of quality care for babies and mothers. This achievement also means that all teams are delivering an outstanding service with a particular focus on infant feeding.

The Baby Friendly Programme is a worldwide programme of the World Health Organisation and Unicef to ensure health care organisations offer the highest standards of care for pregnant women and breastfeeding mothers and babies. The aims of the programme are for babies across the globe to have the best start in life.

The programme trains health professionals and children's centres to support mothers to breastfeed and help them to build a close and loving relationship with their babies.

The programme also helps to ensure that professionals can provide sensitive and effective care and support for mothers, enabling them to make an informed choice about feeding, get breastfeeding off to a good start and overcome any challenges they may face.

For Surrey families this means that they have additional assurance that all implemented Baby Friendly standards have been externally assessed by Unicef UK. This assessment involves interviewing mothers about the care they have received and reviewing policies, guidance and internal audits.

All mothers who were interviewed spoke warmly of their centres and the staff. The assessors were very impressed by the degree of collaborative working across services.

Nicola Eschbaecher, Health Visitor and Breastfeeding Lead said:

"We are all very proud of the commitment shown by our staff to achieve this amazing award. A Level 3 reaccreditation not only shows that we have high level knowledge and skills in Breastfeeding support, but also that as an organisation, we can sustain this outstanding level. Families can be confident that they are receiving up to date, high quality care from all staff within our Health Visiting Teams."

In addition, Unicef UK programme seeks to ensure that health professionals and parents only receive scientific, unbiased and factual information about breastmilk substitutes, rather than misleading and often confusing marketing messages.

Nicola added: *'All Mums can be confident that they are at the heart of our care. The level and quality of support they will receive is of the highest standard and our support is non-judgemental whether they choose to breast or bottle feed. We help mothers to make informed decisions that are in the best interest of their babies.'*

Sarah Baker, Interim Director of CFHS said: *'This is a wonderful achievement by our staff. This acknowledgement of the high quality of service we provide to Surrey families to ensure their babies have the best possible start in life is attributed to the first class expertise and care by dedicated and the hard work of our health visiting teams. I would like to say thank you to all my colleagues in these teams for their continued hard work and dedication to the health and well being of local families.'*

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NOTES TO EDITORS

CSH Surrey is one of three NHS partners that provide the Children and Family Health Surrey service. The other two partners are First Community Health and Care, and Surrey and Borders Partnership NHS Foundation Trust. Together, we provide one Surrey-wide community health service for children and young people from 0 to 19 years of age (up to 25 years for young adults with additional needs) and their families and carers. For further information please contact:

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