

Stories help describe what services do.

Every-day and ordinary, or life changing and extraordinary?

Ruby's Story - Infant Feeding Team - April 2023

Main purpose of service: The Infant Feeding Team support parents with feeding their baby. The Team offer a variety of support in the home, on the phone, in clinics and small support groups from health visitors, child development practitioners, volunteer breastfeeding peer supporters and lactation consultants. All staff are trained to the Unicef Baby Friendly Initiative Standards to support parents with breastfeeding, bottle feeding and weaning.

About the person: When Ruby gave birth to her second child Winnie last September, she knew she wanted to breastfeed. She had given birth to her first baby Arthur during Lockdown and had found breastfeeding very difficult, as he was a needy feeder, and she didn't know what she was doing. She wanted things to be different second time around. But she also knew that Winnie was tongue-tied and that it could make things more difficult.

Ruby explains: **"I referred myself for support with breastfeeding and Winnie's tongue-tie whilst I was still in hospital. We had an appointment when Winnie was 2 weeks old, for her tongue-tie to be snipped. Unfortunately, the tongue-tie re-attached, so needed to be cut again when she was 5 weeks old."**

Reassuring support: Ruby saw Nicola from the Infant Feeding Team whilst Winnie was tongue-tied. She continues: **"Nicola was brilliant, she reassured me that I was doing the right thing."** Ruby started attending Locala's Feeding Support Group for on-going support with her breastfeeding journey. **"Both Hayley and Jo from Group were lovely. There were no groups happening due to Covid when I had Arthur, so Nicola came to the house and was absolutely fantastic...but I really did appreciate being able to go to Group this time around and mix with other mums."**

Group support: When I first started attending Group Winnie's weight wasn't quite right and I was concerned that her weight gain was slow. I was pumping every 2-3 hours and was comfortable giving her a bit of formula to help with her weight. Hayley and Jo were really supportive and reassured me that it was ok for me to do what I wanted to do and what worked for us. They asked what I wanted around things such as using formula and were really non-judgemental about my choices. They provided incredibly personalised care and understood what I wanted. They checked Winnie's latch and talked me through what I was doing and helped us to work on it. They were fantastic and really helpful."

Making a difference: Ruby appreciated having somewhere to go, where she could share experiences and get help and advice and chat to other mums. **"The support from other breastfeeding mums has been invaluable. I am the only breastfeeding mum in my group of friends. My friends have bottle-fed their babies, so can't fully understand my experience. Winnie is now 6 months old and I'm still breastfeeding, even though I've had issues, and that's definitely**

Ruby spoke with Isla from the Engagement Team and has consented for her story to be shared both internally and externally.

down to Group and other mums spurring me on and me being able to ask questions and learn from them.”

Ruby says that she’s had an incredibly positive experience with Group. **“I met a variety of mums at different stages of the breastfeeding journey. Some were first-timers, one mum was on her third child but her first time breastfeeding and others had breastfed multiple times. They all had different experiences to share. Some of us have even set up a WhatsApp group and continue to support each other outside of Group.”**