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Bottle feeding: an assessment tool for parents and staff:
recognising your baby / child is feeding well and if support is needed.

Form developed for use with babies born after 37 weeks gestation.
Your MW or HV will go through this form with you.

Mother/parent/carer - If any responses unticked, you may want to seek support.

General health and wellbeing – Your baby / child:				✓	✓	✓	✓
Has wet nappies (pee).	Days 1-2 = 1-2 or more in 24 hr.	Days 3-4 = 3-4 or more in 24 hr, heavier.	Day 6+ = 6 or more in 24 hr, heavy (feels like 2-4 tablespoons of water in a nappy).				
Has dirty nappies (poo).	Days 1-2 = 1or more in 24 hr, meconium.	Days 3-4 = 1+, changing colour.	Day 4+ = At least 1 soft yellow. Seek advice if baby appears uncomfortable when pooing.				
Has re-gained birthweight by day 14 with ongoing appropriate weight gain / growth (see feeding plan / growth charts in back of Red book).							
Is generally calm and relaxed when feeding and content after most feeds.							
Baby is no longer jaundiced by 2 weeks (for babies born at 37 weeks or more) or 3 weeks (for babies born at less than 37 weeks).							
Is alert and waking for feeds.							
Expressed breastmilk – You (Mother):							
If expressing, can do so effectively, and store expressed breastmilk safely (per NHS guidance).							
If your goal is to continue breastfeeding, you understand how to protect milk supply (see breastfeeding tool).							
Are aware of sources of breastfeeding support, including for social and emotional wellbeing.							
Responsive bottle feeding – Parents / primary caregivers:							
Give most of the feeds themselves and limit number of people giving feeds.							
Recognise early feeding cues.							
Know that feeding can be an opportunity to hold your baby close, talk to them and have eye contact and this helps support their brain development.							

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Pacing the feed – Parents / primary caregivers:	✓	✓	✓	✓
Hold the baby upright and the bottle horizontally allowing just enough milk to cover tip of the teat (teat should not be full) to support baby to control flow of feed.				
Invite baby to take the lead by gently rubbing the teat on their top lip.				
Observe baby for signs they are coping with the flow and signs they need a break, then remove teat or lower bottle to slow or cut off flow.				
Finishing the feed – Parents / primary caregivers:				
Recognise cues that your baby has had enough (turns away, splays hands, spits out milk).				
Don't force your baby to finish the feed if showing cues they have had enough. Leftover milk is discarded.				
Preparing feeds – Parents / primary caregivers understand:				
• How to wash and sterilise equipment appropriately. • To use **any brand** of **first stage milk** up to 1 year. Brand can be switched anytime in first year. There is no evidence to use milks other than first stage unless medically prescribed. • Making up feeds one at a time* *(Boil at least 1 litre fresh tap water and add to bottle within 30 minutes followed by the powder, so that the water is hotter than 70° when the powder is added to help kill bacteria present in the powder. Formula preparation devices are not recommended.)* • Managing formula feeding outside the home* *(Pre-sterilise bottles and teats, measure powder and keep in separate sterilised container, use just boiled water kept in an insulated vacuum flask, and ensure water is hotter than 70° when powder added).* • Total volume in 24 hrs as per First Steps Nutrition guidance* (*See First Steps Nutrition Trust).				

Mother/parent/carer: If any responses unticked, you may want to seek support.

Staff: Consider watching a feed and developing a care plan (document in blue pages). Refer for additional support if needed.

Care plan commenced with plan to review (Y / N, Name, Date):	

Also discuss: Continuing to mix feed and achieving your goals. Introducing solids at / around 6 months. Suitable foods / feeding methods alongside formula. Milk volume changes as solids increase. Transition to full fat or semi-skimmed cow's milk from 1 year. Returning to work. Feeding when out. Managing night feeds. Awareness of local / specialist support. Oral health. Use of open cups / beakers. Healthy Start scheme which includes vitamins.