

## Things To Remember When Visiting Buscot Ward

Because of the lack of space on Buscot ward, only two visitors per baby are allowed in the room at any one time. One of these visitors has to be a parent.

For security reasons, unsupervised visits are not possible. Please do not try to visit the ward without a parent - security has to remain tight and staff are not allowed to admit visitors who are not supervised by a parent.

Respect the wishes of parents, who may need to spend a lot of quiet time together with their sick baby.

Respect the privacy of other parents by looking at your own baby and not at other babies on the ward.

is a high risk is Special Care Units, so please make sure that outdoor clothing and bags are not taken into the ward. A family room with lockers is provided for clothes and bags when entering Buscot and you are encouraged to use these.

Hand washing is essential when entering the ward to help safeguard yours and other babies who remain so vulnerable at this time.

Information can only be given over the phone to parents. Please ask your relatives not to phone the ward.

Remember that the staff are there to help. If there's anything you don't understand: ask them or ask us.

We are always just a phone call away.

Babies in Buscot Support (BIBS) is a charitable organisation run on a volunteer basis by parents who have had children in Buscot Special Care Baby Unit (SCBU).

It exists to support parents and family of premature and sick newborn babies in the Reading area.

Our charity is devoted to:

Supporting and encouraging the parents of premature and sick newborn babies

Raising the awareness of special care babies and their needs

Fundraising to provide the latest technology and equipment for Buscot ward to ensure that every special care baby has the best start in life possible

# BIBS



Babies In Buscot Support

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Mums and Dads - a Babies in Buscot Support guide to special care

# Mums and Dads



A guide to coping with babies in special care

Most people do not know how they will react to having a baby in Special Care until it actually happens. The truth is that we all react differently. BIBS exists to support you and your family through what can be a traumatic time for you all.

### Don't Try to Cope Alone

You may be surprised at the amount of support offered to you. Our advice to you is simply to remember that the offers are there and to take advantage of them when you need to.

Family and friends will rally around and will be only too happy to help you in any way they can. In fact, we've prepared a separate information leaflet aimed at families, giving them ideas on how best to help you during this trying time.

You may find your faith a comfort at this time, and in the weeks and months to come. Religious representatives are welcomed into the hospital - subject to arrangement. Baptisms and blessings can take place on the ward, and the hospital chaplain is always available for you. All you need do is ask.

One of the primary concerns for us at BIBS is bringing together parents whose babies have been in Special Care in the past with those whose babies are there now.

We are here for you.

### Look Around You

It may seem like an inappropriate time to be making friends, but the support that comes from others on the ward has helped lots of us through some very dark days. Maybe the friendships made here can help you too.

If you get the chance to pass the time with other mums and dads, you'll be amazed at the difference it can make.

### Routine

You may find it easier to adjust to being in Special Care if you start to build a routine around your visits. Whether we like to admit it or not, we're generally believed to be creatures of habit!

Lots of people find comfort in routine: it helps make unusual situations 'normal' for us. And it can be the same with Special Care.

### Keep a Record

Some families like to take photos of their baby, and some keep a diary for them. It's sometimes comforting to look back at different milestones and to remember what made you cry one day and laugh the next.

You may choose to record the names of those people on the ward who came to mean a lot to you and your family - perhaps they helped you in a special way or provided support in a way you'd like to remember them for.

### Take Care of Yourself

In order to care for your baby, you first need to care for yourself.

Set time aside to watch your favourite TV programme, or to have lunch with a friend. Have a warm bath, a hot drink - anything to help you relax for a while.

### Being With Your Baby

If your baby is well enough, it's good for you to get involved in his day to day care. Whether it's washing, nappy changing or feeding, it helps to feel useful.

You may be able to cuddle your baby for short periods, but even if this is not possible for you, be assured that he will soon recognise you and your special touch. Remember that the doctors and nurses will change with each shift, but you are there solely for your baby. He will soon come to know this.

Chat with your baby, sing him songs, read him stories. He heard your voice while he was still in the womb and it may bring him comfort now.

Some parents like to place photos of themselves and perhaps the rest of the family in the incubator for their baby to look at. A small bright toy can also be stimulating for your little one.

It's believed that 'smell' is one of our strongest senses, and one of the hardest. Even when you think your baby cannot hear or see you, the chances are that he can still be aware of your scent. Wear a cloth against your skin so that it can be placed in the incubator to comfort your baby. Similarly, take a blanket of his home with you so that you can share his scent too.

### And Finally ...

This is precious time between you and your baby that can never be replaced, so whatever each day brings, cherish the time and hold it dear. Your baby needs you and you are there for him.

That's all that matters.