Aldi markets its own-brand Mamia infant formula. The labels break the prohibition on idealising text and images.

It promotes infant formula in-store with price cuts and shelf-talkers, despite assuring Trading Standards in 2013 that it would stop doing so.

Examples in the Breaks the Code - Strengthen the Law box are not permitted under the International Code and Resolutions adopted by the World Health Assembly. These measures cover more products than the UK law.

Companies should follow these standards independently of national measures, but the specific provisions need to be included in UK law to make them legally binding.

The promotions that Aldi has run for feeding bottles break the Code, but not the current UK law.

Aldi promotes complementary foods for use before 6 months of age. This is against government policy and the Code, though not current UK law.

Baby Milk Action has sent this profile to the company and will update it if action is taken.

**Company details for enforcement officers:**

Matthew Campbell Barnes  
Chief Executive Officer (UK and Ireland)  
Aldi Stores  
Holly Lane  
Atherstone  
Warwickshire  
CV9 2SQ

All formulas have to meet the same composition requirements set in the law. Mamia formula does not comply with labelling requirements in the law as it includes an animal image, idealizing text (“unique blend”). It also encourages “combination” feeding.

To avoid cross-promotion, a different brand name should have been used for the infant formula. As it is part of a range, the text for the type of formula should be at least as big as the brand name to avoid confusion with other milks.

Aldi is following established formula companies in offering parenting advice to promote the formula brand.

1 http://www.telegraph.co.uk/finance/newsbysector/retailandconsumer/10343032/Aldi-a-history-of-the-low-cost-supermarket.html
A Twitter chat using the #MAMIANIGHTFEED hashtag was advertised in the Loved By Parents (LBP) online Magazine in October 2016, just as its formula started appearing in stores.

Aldi is also following other companies in promoting the formula brand name through cause related marketing. For the first time, it sponsored Barnardo’s Big Toddle in 2016, aimed at parents with children under 5 years of age. Barnardo’s Big Toddle in Ireland has been sponsored by Danone in the past to promote its Cow & Gate formula.

IN-STORE PROMOTION OF INFANT FORMULA

The UK law prohibits point-of-sale promotion of infant formula. Aldi uses both price-cut promotions and “new” signs to promote formula brands (shelf-talkers are generally displayed above products in Aldi stores, not below, as with its own-brand formula on the previous page and most of the examples shown right).

These examples from around the country in 2015 and 2016 demonstrate that Aldi did not deliver on an earlier promise to stop this practice (see box below).

POINT-OF-SALE PROMOTION CONTINUES DESPITE ASSURANCES TO TRADING STANDARDS IN 2013

Mike Brady of Baby Milk Action raised point-of-sale promotions with Aldi in 2013 (Stoke-on-Trent example below). Aldi’s response is given here. Its assurances have not been reflected by reality. The Improvement Notices regime introduced in July 2016 could be applied to more recent examples.

Dear Mr Brady

Thank you for your email regarding the incorrect promotion of SMA infant formula in the Aldi, Stoke-on-Trent store.

We are aware of this matter and have been working with Trading Standards to ensure compliance with the ‘Infant Formula and Follow-on Formula Regulations (2007)’ across all of our stores nationwide.

Trading Standards are satisfied that we are working with stores to ensure the correct promotion of the SMA infant formula and that we are rectifying any instances of non-compliance.

We are reminding our trading teams of the correct in-store promotion procedures and the need to remove any incorrect price cards and shelf-talkers. We will of course take immediate action to ensure the correct point of sale is displayed in the Stoke-on-Trent store.

Thanks again for contacting us about this matter and please let us know if we can help with anything further.

Kind regards

The Aldi Buying Team.
Aldi exploits the lack of restrictions on feeding bottle promotion by including these as special buys in the Baby and Toddler section of its new online store.

It promoted a nursing pillow in its instore magazine with the headline “Baby’s first sips”, showing a mother bottle feeding her baby, with an advertisement for Tommee Tippee “closer to nature” bottles underneath.

WHO and the NHS recommend that infants be fed only breastmilk or infant formula until 6 months of age.

Foods promoted for use before 6 months come within the scope of the Code and should not be promoted.

Aldi sponsors LBP. As well as recommending Aldi products and #MAMIANIGHTFEED Twitter chat to the public (previous page), LBP named Aldi its “supermarket of the year” in 2016, not for the first time.