

COVID update 2 August 2021

Dear Families,

I am writing to update you on the latest COVID Lockdown conditions for **C&K centres located in the 11 affected local government areas of South East Queensland.**

As you may have heard, the lockdown has been extended until 4pm Sunday 8th August 2021. The restrictions related to this lockdown have also been revised this morning and some of these new conditions will impact our centres.

The Queensland Government is attempting to, as far as possible, restrict movement of people around Southeast Queensland and as such they have tightened some restrictions particularly in relation to the definition of an essential worker.

Early childhood education and care will remain open for children of essential workers and vulnerable persons only.

Essential Workers

Under the current public health direction, essential work or volunteering is defined as:

Essential work or volunteering refers to work or volunteering that is necessary to maintain essential services and supplies to the community, or to a part of the community, and that cannot be performed from the person's residence.

Examples – a nurse, doctor, cook, teacher, healthcare provider, shelf packer, volunteer at a community centre, or a check out operator perform essential work in the context of this lockdown.

Please be aware that this definition is different to previous lockdowns. We ask that all parents consider their work in the context of this definition and the need to travel outside your home. We appreciate that some essential work can be done from home but that you may require your child to attend kindergarten or childcare to enable you to work effectively. If you consider your work to be essential under this definition and you require your child to attend childcare or kindergarten, our centres are open and will welcome you and your child.

Children experiencing vulnerability

Children experiencing vulnerability or disadvantage may be those who:

- Have previously been in receipt of ACCS, or
- A Health Care Card Holder who is experiencing vulnerability, or
- Have been recommended by a doctor or other professional to attend kindergarten or childcare.

We encourage any child who is experiencing vulnerability to attend kindergarten or childcare over the period of the lockdown.

Staff are now required to wear a mask at all times

This is a new directive of the Department of Health. Previously staff were not required to wear a mask when working with children, but the current directive of the Chief Health Officer is that the Delta strain of COVID is more highly transmissible, and the barrier of a mask is felt to be essential now for the health and safety of staff, children, and families.

Some people have an exemption and are not required to wear a mask. If a staff member is not wearing a mask at the centre, you can assume that they have an exemption. Where possible they will be involved in activities where they can socially distance.

Children & adults with any illness or symptoms

Due to the current concerns about the transmission of disease we are not able to accept any child into a

kindergarten or childcare centre if they have any illness or flu like symptoms including, but not limited to, runny nose, fever, diarrhea, cough, or sore throat. Children who have had an illness will be required to provide a doctor's clearance to return to the centre. While we understand that this will be inconvenient – it is essential that all children are healthy and well while attending our centres. A doctor's clearance can usually be obtained via a telehealth appointment.

If you or a member of your household is directed to quarantine or self-isolate – your child cannot attend a kindergarten or childcare setting until that isolation / quarantine order is lifted.

Kindy Now App

Until further notice, the Kindy Now App will be suspended. Bookings for additional days will need to be made by contacting your centre Director. This will assist us in managing the numbers of children in attendance and our staff ratios. We appreciate your understanding that we have several staff who are not able to attend work due to illness or because they have been required to isolate.

Fees

We understand that many families are wanting to know if fees will be payable for days that your children are unable to attend due to the lockdown. We are currently awaiting advice from Government and once received, we will be able to share this with you.

If you have any questions relating to these or other COVID related matters, please contact our dedicated advice line advice@candk.asn.au

We thank you for your patience and cooperation as we all negotiate this changing situation.

Keep safe.

Regards,

Dr Sandra Cheeseman
Chief Operating Officer