

## 2022 COVID-19 Update

7 January 2022

Dear Families,

Firstly, Happy New Year and welcome back to C&K.

The spread of COVID-19 has escalated in Queensland over the past weeks, and we are anticipating that this trend will continue.

I wanted to write to let you know what C&K is doing to support families and the precautions we have put in place to protect staff and children in our centres.

The announcement of a [revised definition of a 'close contact'](#) will have implications for early childhood settings across Queensland. C&K has been advised by the Department of Education that early childhood settings are **not** defined as 'household like'.

Under this definition, children, educators and family members who attend an early childhood setting at the same time as a positive case are not considered 'close contacts'.

### **This means that**

- Anyone in attendance at the same time as a positive COVID case will **not need to isolate** or quarantine – unless directed to do so by a Public Health Authority or unless they develop COVID symptoms.
- C&K will **not need to close** a centre due to a positive case, unless specifically directed by Queensland Health.

The new definition means that in most cases, early childhood centres will be able to continue to operate following the identification of a COVID case, with careful monitoring of the health and wellbeing of children and staff.

### **How you can help**

It is critically important that families:

- 1. Advise your centre director of any suspected or confirmed cases of COVID within your family.**

C&K is committed to keeping you informed of all confirmed COVID cases that are identified at your centre, where we know or suspect that there has been a COVID positive person in attendance.

We will not disclose any personal information in relation to this advice, but rather we can alert other families and staff to be mindful of any emerging health concerns.

- 2. Keep your child home if they have any respiratory symptoms** - during this critical time, we are not able to accept into care any child who has any respiratory or COVID like symptoms.

Likewise, our staff will not be attending the centre if they are unwell.

**3. Observe the government requirement to wear a mask at all times when entering our centres.**

I appreciate that some members of the community are exempt from wearing a mask – however, I respectfully request that everyone who is able to wear a mask do so. This will minimise the spread of infection from person to person, as well as avoid our staff needing to remind parents and visitors of the requirement.

**4. Keep a close eye on your emails for updates from C&K**

With the increasing numbers of people who are required to quarantine or who have contracted COVID, there may be times where we need to close a centre due to workforce supply. We have already seen this occur in NSW with centres closing.

There are two main reasons we may need to close a room or a centre:

- We are directed to by Queensland Health
- We are unable to adequately staff a centre.

In this event, we will give as much notice as possible but cannot guarantee that last minute changes may be necessary.

Please know that we are doing everything within our powers to recruit suitably qualified staff and ensure workforce supply.

**How we are working to keep our people and children safe**

The Queensland Government mandated vaccination for all early childhood staff in December. As such, all C&K staff working with your children are now vaccinated.

We are encouraging staff and families to access their booster shot as soon as possible.

C&K is currently reviewing our Commitment Statement and protocols for keeping children, families, and staff safe and well. The updated version will be shared with centres and families early next week.

Our centres are following robust health and hygiene practices as well as taking extra precautions to minimise the risk of infection.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact [advice@candk.asn.au](mailto:advice@candk.asn.au)

We ask all families to work with us and to respect the work that our committed teachers and educators do each day to support you and your child. We will keep you informed as the situation changes.

Take care,

Dr Sandra Cheeseman

Chief Executive Officer, C&K