

The Kindergarten Service is committed to our duty of care in providing an environment which supports the safety, wellbeing and confidentiality of all stakeholders. As part of this commitment, as is undertaken with other illnesses and infectious diseases, we acknowledge that families need to be informed when a confirmed case of a communicable illness has been present at the Service (enrolled child or staff member, in the circumstance that they have tested positive on the day of attendance or have been in attendance at the Service during the two days prior to the day of testing positive).

We ask that all families monitor themselves and their children for symptoms of COVID-19 and if you or your child have symptoms of COVID-19, please do not attend the Service.

In the instance you/your child has undertaken a RAT or PCR test and this has returned a negative result, your child is able to attend care as long as their symptoms/illness, is not one which requires non-attendance as per our standard policies and procedures in relation to illness and infectious diseases (inclusive of the Queensland Health Time Out Poster and Staying Healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services).

Attending a Service where a confirmed case has been present will not meet 'close contact' action and isolation requirements as outlined below. As an ECEC Service we will continue to adhere to our policies and procedures, in supporting health and wellbeing regarding an illness or infectious disease. When determining whether someone is a close contact, it is important to note that early childhood services are not considered a household, or household like accommodation or care facility.

At 6 pm on Thursday the 28th of April 2022, the isolation requirements for a close contact changed. We have updated this document to reflect these changes and have had confirmation from the Department of Education (Early Childhood Education and Care) on Friday the 29th of April, that schools and early childhood settings are not considered vulnerable settings, in relation to the close contact requirements. We have also updated documentation for our staff, all close contact employees will be undertaking regular testing for COVID-19 and wear face masks whilst at the workplace, if they are in attendance during their 7 day period as a close contact. Our COVID safe practices of hand hygiene, physical distancing, staying away from the Service if you are unwell, ventilation and systematic cleaning, continue to be in place to support the wellbeing of our Service community.

You are a close contact if:

- You have been with a person that has COVID-19 for more than four hours in a house or other accommodation, a care facility or similar, or
- You live with a person that has COVID-19 and have had more than four hours contact with them in the household setting.

You are a close contact from the date the person diagnosed with COVID-19 took the test that returned a positive result.

You are **not** a close contact if you have had COVID-19 in the past 12 weeks.

The actions to undertake if you are close contact now relate to if you are symptomatic or asymptomatic and are outlined later in this document.

Please note at the time of publication: Queensland Health has clarified that early childhood education and care services (including family day care services) are **not in scope** of the close contact definition and are not considered household like or a residential care facility. Operations can continue within COVID safe guidelines unless directed by Queensland Health or in the event that a service needs to close due to staff not being available as per usual business continuity plans.

As the COVID-19 situation in Queensland rapidly develops, advice provided in this message may change or be updated accordingly. Please continue to check the Queensland Health website for the latest updates to help manage COVID-19 cases.

What to do when a parent/caregiver or your child is confirmed to have COVID-19

Testing and Notifying the Service of a Positive Result	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you/your child undertakes testing for COVID-19 (PCR or Rapid Antigen Testing (RAT)), please advise the Service as soon as possible and follow the directions as per Queensland Health Website. • Please do not attend the Service until the isolation period is completed as per Health Directives and the individual context. • If a positive RAT test is returned the person is assumed to have COVID-19. • If a parent or child receives a positive result on a PCR or RAT test, they should notify the Service as soon as possible, including the date of testing and last date, time and duration that they were present at the Service. • Following Queensland Health directions, isolate for minimum of 7 days and please do not attend the Service. • You/ your child can leave isolation after 7 days if you have no more symptoms or only a mild, dry cough. If you still have symptoms after 7 days, stay home until your symptoms are gone, or seek medical care if you are not sure. • You /your child don't need a negative test to end isolation.
Service Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notification to the local Public Health Unit (PHU) is not required. • Record the notification in the COVID-19 Confirmed Case and Close Contact Register. • Notification to families is only required for confirmed positive COVID-19 cases of an enrolled child or staff member, that have been present in the Service the day of or during the two days prior to, testing positive. • The Service will undertake a clean of the Service and workplace as per the recommendation from Queensland Health in responding to a confirmed case of COVID-19 in the workplace. Where closure of the Service is required to support this clean, this will be undertaken at the direction of the Approved Provider in supporting wellbeing for all stakeholders.
Support During Isolation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If it is an enrolled child undertaking isolation, please keep in contact with the Service. Staff will be able to support you and provide opportunities for connection and continued learning from home at your individual family preference. • A diagnosed COVID-19 person has an isolation period of a minimum of 7 days.
Returning to Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A child that has been confirmed to be positive for COVID-19 is able to return to the Service, when they have completed the required isolation period and are well. • A medical clearance is not required to be provided. • If others in your household tested positive while you/your child were in isolation, you/ your child can still leave isolation after 7 days, but they must continue to isolate.
In the 7 days after ending isolation – parents / caregivers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you leave your house: wear a face mask, including whenever you are indoors, or when you're outdoors but can't socially distance and wash your hands regularly. A child under 12 years old is not required to wear a face mask for 7 days after ending their isolation, however a school may require a student to wear one as part of their policies for health and safety reasons. • We therefore ask that parents/caregivers wear a face mask whilst at the Service during the 7 day period after they end isolation. Children at the Service are not required to wear a face mask. In addition to wearing a face mask, if you would prefer to undertake arrival and departure from the entry to the Service please let staff know and they will facilitate this for you.

What to do when a parent/caregiver or your child is confirmed close contact

Notifying the Service as a close contact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If your child or the parent/guardian that regularly attends the Service is identified as a close contact, please advise the Service as soon as possible.
Service Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Record the notification in the COVID-19 Confirmed Case and Close Contact Register. Please note additional cleaning and notification to families is only required for confirmed positive COVID-19 cases of an enrolled child or staff member, that have been present in the Service the day of or during the two days prior to, testing positive. No action is required for close contacts.
Symptomatic close contact first steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access testing for COVID-19 – PCR or RAT and isolate until a result is provided. A child under the age of two years who is a close contact with symptoms consistent with COVID-19 must only be tested using a COVID-19 PCR test or a RAT administered by a health professional. If you/your child test negative, you/they must stay home until your/your child’s symptoms resolve or for 7 days, whichever is earlier. If your symptoms/your child’s symptoms end before 6 days, you/ your child must do a test before leaving home. You/ your child must do a test on Day 6 even if you/ your child no longer have symptoms or have previously tested negative.
Symptomatic close contact – return to care/ the Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advise the Service of when your child’s symptoms have resolved and their negative test result.
Asymptomatic close contact – no COVID-19 symptoms – first steps and attending care.	<p>If you/your child have no COVID-19 symptoms, you/ your child don't have to quarantine and can leave home for any reason, but there are some steps you must follow for the next 7 days:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor yourself/ your child for symptoms for 7 days from the time you/ your child became a close contact. Wear a face mask outside of home, including outdoors if you can't socially distance, unless you are a person who is under 12 or who has a physical or mental health condition which makes this unsuitable. Children under 12 do not have to but are encouraged to wear a face mask where safe. Therefore adult close contacts are asked to wear a face mask whilst at the Service. You should notify your employer or educational setting you are a close contact before attending. Parents/carers of a child in an early childhood education and care setting must let their service know. If you/ your child get any COVID-19 symptoms, you/ your child must get tested using a RAT kit or a PCR test. A child under the age of two years who is a close contact with symptoms consistent with COVID-19 must only be tested using a COVID-19 PCR test or a RAT administered by a health professional. Not visit vulnerable settings, such as hospitals, aged care and disability facilities, unless in exceptional or compassionate circumstances (for example, end of life visits). While you/your child are a close contact it is recommended you/ your child test for COVID-19 if you plan to leave home and mix with other people. You / your child should test on the first day you leave home and every second day (e.g. days 2, 4 and 6) until you are no longer a close contact. If you would prefer as an adult close contact that you limit your engagement with others by having your child arrive and depart from the Service entry, please advise staff and they will facilitate this. When the steps above are adhered to by the parent/carer and child (as relevant to requirements for children under the age of 12), you / your child are able to attend the Service.

Asymptomatic close contact – choosing to not attend care

We recognise that some families will choose to limit their engagement with the community and not attend care for a period of 7 days as a close contact, in lieu of adhering to the Guidelines for Close Contacts in Queensland.

If it is an enrolled child undertaking isolation, please keep in contact with the Service. Staff will be able to support you and provide opportunities for connection and continued learning from home at your individual family preference.

Priority RATs for ECEC staff and children - If ECEC staff or children are sick/symptomatic (Special Broadcast Early Childhood Education and Care)

- To keep our education communities COVID-19 safe, staff and children must not attend ECEC services if they are unwell or have COVID-19 Symptoms.
- ECEC staff and children should attend their local Queensland Health testing clinic where they will be prioritised to receive a rapid antigen test (RAT).
- If the test result is negative and the ECEC staff member or child is well, they can return to ECEC services. If the test is positive, the ECEC staff member or child will need to follow Queensland Health quarantine and isolation requirements.
- Please note not all types of RATs are suitable for young children or babies. Please seek health advice before conducting a test.

Information from the Queensland Health Site if you or your child has tested positive for COVID-19

In the 12 weeks after ending isolation

You are unlikely to get COVID-19 again in the 12 weeks after you recover. You are considered a “cleared case” for 12 weeks after your isolation ends. During this time, if you get COVID-19 symptoms again, you do not need to get tested. If someone else in your house gets COVID-19 you are not considered a close contact and you do not need to get tested or go into quarantine.

More than 12 weeks after you recover

If it has been more than 12 weeks after you have recovered and you have COVID-19 symptoms again, get tested. If you get a positive result, complete 7 days of isolation. If you have been told you are a close contact of someone who has COVID-19, follow the testing and quarantine steps for close contacts.

Cleaning guidance and procedures

In line with the Queensland Government Managing COVID-19 in workplaces, deep cleaning is no longer required where a confirmed case of COVID-19 has been identified. This includes schools and early childhood centres. The two-step precautionary clean – involving a daily normal hygienic clean followed by sanitising - is sufficient to reduce the transmission of COVID-19. In early childhood settings, the National Health and Medical Research Councils (NHMRC) preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services should also be followed.

Service Closure or Reduction of Service Delivery due to Staffing Arrangements

The Service is required at all times to meeting staffing requirements of the National Quality Framework (NQF). This includes having a Responsible Person on site, meeting staff qualification requirements including training in first aid (asthma and anaphylaxis) and meeting educator to child ratios. As the pandemic progresses in Queensland, there may be brief periods where a Service needs to reduce service delivery (duration of the program or number of children able to attend) or close if staffing arrangement cannot be maintained (due to staff awaiting COVID-19 test results or undertaking isolation as directed by PHU / Queensland Health Website information).

The decision to close or the provision of reduced service delivery will be decided by the Executive Committee as Approved Provider. The Executive Committee understand the impact that closure or reduction of service delivery will have for families, children and employees. This action will only be undertaken when all other efforts to meet staffing arrangements has been exhausted.

Families will be advised as soon as possible should a reduction of Service Delivery or Service Closure be required. Should this be necessary, this notification will take place via email to families.

We thank all families for their support during this time.