

Welcome to the Penguin Room!

We are very excited to have you and your child join our class. There are many things that you will learn about the Penguins and this packet contains some of the information we would like you to know before you start in the room.

The Penguin Room works under the same philosophy and curriculum goals as the other rooms at NBCC. Our curriculum is specifically designed to enhance children natural development progression. In everything we do we aim to maintain our primary goal of being a child centered room. We observe the child's interests and curiosities and plan all of our activities around them.

While your child is in the Penguin room we will be in constant communication. We have a large parent display board outside the room with information, we utilize the parent mailboxes, the white erase board will highlight the overall activities of the day, and finally a picture with a description of what you child has been interested in for that specific day will be sent at the end of every week.

In the room your child will have a few different locations for their things from home. They will have a coat-hook in the hallway with a cubby for their extra shoes, hats and gloves, a cubby in the classroom for toys should they choose to bring them from home, and an extra clothing bin in the bathroom.

Children are welcome to bring in toys from home, which they can store on their coat-hook in the hallway or in their cubby in the classroom. Please make sure that any toys you and your child choose to bring to school are small enough to fit in their cubby in the classroom, but are not choking hazards- many of our children still put toys in their mouths.

There are certain items your child will need to bring with them, starting on their first full day in the room, the list of those items can be found in this packet.

We are looking forward to getting to know our newest Penguin and your family! Please feel free to set up a time to visit our room before your child starts!

Sincerely,

The Penguin Teachers

Amber Bush, Emily Cutright-Kopco and Landon Rickard

Saying Good-bye

When you drop off your child it can be quite overwhelming, especially the first few times. In the beginning the environment and faces are all new. A predictable routine will make this transition smoother for both you and your child.

The first step in this routine is setting your child up to know what to expect. This can be done before bed the night before or in the morning on the way to school. Communicating and talking with your child about the expectations will help them be prepared for drop-off and the rest of the day.

A second important aspect is maintaining consistency with the routine that you choose. Some days it will go smoothly and other days it won't. We are here to support you and work with you during the transition from home to school.

When deciding on a routine, make sure that you always leave time for a good-bye. Leaving without saying good-bye can have a negative impact on your child's day or on future drop offs. During the toddler years an open and trusting relationship is very important in their development.

Some routines that have worked for other families are:

- Getting your child engaged in an idea such as reading a book, building with blocks or sitting down for snack.
- Creating a simple saying for goodbyes :

ie: a "see you later kiss", "love you, see you after _____"

Along with the routine, it is important that once you say goodbye, you follow through. You can give the last hug/kiss and then go ahead and leave. If your child is having a hard time with the goodbye, a teacher will be available to help. This consistency will help your child adapt to the new routine more quickly.

We understand that this can be a tough transition, especially if your child is having a difficult time. Please feel free to call us later in the morning to see how your child is feeling or to ask us any questions you may have about the process.

We also have an observation room that you may use after leaving to see how your child is doing after the goodbye.

Drop Off Times

In order to maintain consistency with both your child and our classroom routines, it is extremely helpful to drop your child off by 9am and no later than 10am. Between the hours of 11:30-3:00 we are having lunch and nap time. If you need to drop your child off late, please let us know and do so before 11:30am or after 3:00pm.

Potty Time

In the Penguin room we allow each child the opportunity to try the potty every time they get a diaper change. If the child is wet, they remove their own diaper standing up and we put on a clean diaper while they are still standing up. For BM diapers we use the changing table. Changing the children standing up allows for them to practice their self-help skills, which we believe, are so important for this stage of development.

Transitioning out of diapers:

Once we see a child is consistently dry and using the potty to pee and poop we believe the child is showing us that their body is ready for underwear. Potty training can be a very tricky and sometimes frustrating process, so we will keep communication open and we can start when you are ready at home. Consistency is going to be the key to a successful potty training experience.

If your child is not quite ready for underwear but you desire them to have a little more Independence with potty turns, you could consider pull-ups. Children in pull-ups are expected to be able to take off their pants, shoes and socks, change their pull-up and place the above articles of clothing back on. We find that pull-ups with detachable sides are necessary for changing BM's. Our final request with pull-ups is that children in pull-ups wear clothing they can easily put on (please no onesies).

Children and Modesty

We are aware and respect that young children are often open about their body and bodily functions. Children often wish to partially or fully disrobe while playing (they still need to wear underwear or a diaper) as well as taking potty turns together. While we understand this stage of development, we also understand the concerns of parents and have created guidelines to meet the needs of children and adults. If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to speak with one of the teachers.

Simple Ways to Promote Independence

Independence in the Penguin Room:

In the penguin room we practice the ideas in the following article daily. We encourage both self-help skills and choice making. There are a few things that you can do to help your child with this in the classroom.

Since many of their self-help skills are developed around dressing themselves, providing clothing and shoes that are simple for them to do on their own sets them up for success.

- *Shoes that are easy to slip on and have velcro straps seem to provide the greatest success and confidence building for toddlers.*
- *Pants with elastic waistbands or simple snaps help children during potty turns and clothing changes.*

Please read this article for more ways to help your toddler and for an idea of the things we do to encourage independence in our room.

Simple Ways to Foster Independence in Your Toddler

When children are born, they need us helplessly. Parents naturally mold to the needs of their child. At some point, it becomes necessary to allow them to learn how to be independent. The road to independence can start early on in life and will help boost confidence, self-esteem, heighten IQ and provide the tools they will need to be successful in the future. The problem is that it can be very difficult for

mom and dad to let go. Parents naturally bend down to tie shoes, offer assistance when a task cannot be mastered or offer intervention when we see our child struggling. The issue of independence is not so much allowing a child to do so, but allowing the adults in their life to let go.

The first year of life trains the parental mind to do everything for their child. Once a child gains mobility, they also gain a boost in their brain development which is fostered when they are afforded the chance to figure things out. When you see a toddler do the same puzzle over and over again, struggling to fit the pieces all together, it is easy to simply maneuver the puzzle piece so it will slide right in. The problem with this mentality is that it doesn't give the child a sense of accomplishment and actually teaches them that when something is difficult, they will not be able to handle it alone. Thinking broad spectrum, the implication of this lesson can have serious effects on their life. Additionally, as they enter school or engage socially with others they will realize that few people outside of their parents will do so much for them. If your child is never faced with making decisions, solving problems or dealing with frustration they will be completely stymied.

So, letting go isn't easy. Watching a child struggle or become frustrated is difficult for mom and dad. However, when you watch them get through the problem and see them beaming with pride it is easy to see how relevant their independence is in life. The first job as a parent is to become an enabler. This means recognizing what your child can do and what skills they are ready to master in their life. This also means not correcting them if they put their shoes on the wrong feet or their shirt on backward. Praising their successes no matter how small and showing them how adept they are will make your child want to be independent rather than take the easy way out. Here are some tips to letting go:

1. Praise accomplishments!
2. Break habits of doing everything for your child. Rather than lend a hand because you can do it faster or better, ask them to do simple tasks like find their shoes or put trash in the can.
3. Apply expectations. Just like you use the word no to warn them of danger in the home, a 1-2 year old can be assigned responsibility. Obviously, you will need to guide them through the tasks, but setting routines and giving them 'jobs' fosters independent thinking and a sense of responsibility.
4. Offer words of confidence. Rather than ask them if they want help, encourage them to keep trying. If they become agitated, help them learn ways to control their frustration so that they can master a task.
5. One huge step is to ask them to use their words. Many children become used to pointing, grunting or whining to get what they want. Refuse to respond to this by requesting that they use their words and ask calmly. This helps them learn patience and empowers them with ability to communicate

- with others outside of the home.
6. Offer challenging toys and playthings. While the television may be a great babysitter, age appropriate toys that require them to play, learn about their environment and use their imagination will stimulate them and prompt them to busy themselves.
 7. Refrain from taking over while your toddler plays. While you may envision a more creative plan than dumping water from one bucket to another over and over again, young children learn about their environment through hands on play.
 8. Let your child make decisions. If they are making a wrong choice or are misbehaving, offer them a choice of consequences. Similarly, if your child doesn't know what to do in a situation or doesn't know an answer, offer them two to choose from rather than just tell them what they should do.
 9. Resist the urge to hover. Give your child time alone and as they get older reduce the amount of time you spend following them around. If they want to move to another room, allow them to (obviously you need to still supervise) so they will feel secure by themselves.
 10. Use everyday situations as ways to teach lessons. While you are shopping, driving in the car, cooking etc. take time to talk to your child like you would another adult. Baby babbling or thinking they won't understand you belittles their capabilities.

From the year mark onward, children actually crave independence and knowledge. Supporting their needs means not always doing everything for them and empowering them to be the little person that they are. It can be difficult to watch your child grow up so quickly, however that is the biggest part of being a good parent. While you may want to keep them little forever, that is impossibility and nurturing them completely means preparing them for the not always pleasant world ahead. When independence is encouraged at home, they will be confident, bright and skilled at problem solving by the time they hit preschool which can make the experience for them and you, much more comfortable.

Items to bring to school

- Diapers or Extra underwear

- Any Cream that is needed with the appropriate form
(*forms can be found and turned into the office)
- Nap items (anything that your child would need for nap, for example: blanket, crib sized sheet, stuffed animal, etc.)
 - Nap items are to be left in their bags hanging in the hallway on Mondays when you bring your child to school. We will then bring their nap things into the classroom for nap time and then they will stay in bags on their cots for the school week. Fridays their nap things will be in their bags at their coat hooks-we ask that you take them home to wash for the weekend and bring back on Monday!
- Extra clothes (weather appropriate: including pants, shirts and socks)
- A family picture
- Toys from home are also welcome
- 3 ring binder (at least 1" for your child's portfolio)

Daily Schedule

7:00 **Penguin Room** opens

8:00 Breakfast

8:30-10 Free choice

9:10-9:35 Rumpus Room (depending on weather)

9-9:30 Diapers/Potty breaks

10-11 Playground time

11:00 Diapers/Potty breaks

11:15 Group time

11:30 Lunch

12:00 Diapers/ Potty breaks/ Book time

12:15-3 Naptime

3:00 Diapers/ Potty breaks

 Snack

 Free choice

4:05-4:30 Rumpus room

4:30-5:30 Playground time

6:00 **Penguin Room closes**

Daily Schedule

- 7:00 **Penguin Room opens**
- 8:00 Breakfast / Free choice
- 8:30 Diapers / Potty breaks/ Sunscreen
- 9:10-9:35 Rumpus Room (depending on weather)
- 9-10 Playground time
- 10-11:00 Free Choice
- 11:00 Diapers/Potty breaks
- 11:15 Group time
- 11:30 Lunch
- 12:00 Diapers/ Potty breaks/ Book time
- 12:15-3 Naptime
- 3:00 Diapers/ Potty breaks
- Snack
- Free choice
- 4:15 Playground time
- 4:05-4:30 Rumpus room
- 6:00 **Penguin Room closes**