As an Ofsted registered childcare provider, it is required that I regularly observe the children I care for. Observations form an essential part of my role as a childminder, providing me with an insight into children's abilities, learning styles, development and interests.

I am not required to record any observations of your child in writing (other than a statutory Two-Year Progress Check). This is so I can spend more time with your child, engaging in quality interactions and spend less time making notes. Consequently, my observations will often involve me simply watching and taking mental notes on what I see, then using this information to provide suitable support, resources and activities for your child.

However, communication with parents is a vital part of my role. Therefore, informing you about what your child has been doing and how you can support them at home may include some written observations.

My comments may be sent to you via a learning journal, texts, private or group messages, emails, a secure early years app, in a written book or verbally following a session. Comments about your child can be used to aid you in supporting them with their next steps in learning, reinforcing skills they have learnt or building on their interests at home.

The comments that I send to you will give you an insight into what we have been doing. However, photographs can provide so much more information and I find that parents really value seeing these.

I will not take any photos of a child without a parent's written permission and photos will only be used for the purposes that permission is given for. These will be uploaded from my device onto my work laptop. Photographs of children will be stored on a password protected laptop that is stored on the premises, once they have been transferred, they will be deleted from the device. For those children that permission has been given for images to be published on my website or social media parents will be asked to individually approve images verbally in addition to the written consent already given. Once a child has left the setting all photos will be deleted from devices or if permission is withdrawn by a parent or guardian.

In addition to this, nobody on the premises (adults and children) will be allowed to take photographs of minded children on personal ICT equipment. Older children with their own phones or tablets will either be asked not to use these within the setting or to disable/cover their cameras. This includes the use of smart watches which can remotely take photographs from a linked phone. There are no smart speakers used in my home and baby monitors are only used by staff to ensure children are safe and can be observed when sleeping.