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‘Children Come First’ for Coleraine childminder

Local childminder receives quality assurance award

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For immediate use

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See also ‘5 top tips for choosing a childminder’ and photo issued with this release - caption details in editors’ notes

A Coleraine childminder is celebrating the fact that she has received a special quality assurance award in recognition of the outstanding level of care she provides.

Jane McCafferty has just been awarded the ‘Children Come First’ accreditation by NICMA – the Childminding Association.

In order to gain the award, childminders have to be assessed on all aspects of childminding - from promoting children’s learning and development to providing good nutrition.

Jane is one of four members of the Coleraine Sure Start/NICMA childminding network who now hold this prestigious award.

It took her eight months and many hours of study to complete the Children Come First programme, but Jane says the hard work was well worthwhile.

“I’m always wanting to learn what’s best for the kids I look after,” she says. “I’m a great believer in training and in constantly trying to improve what I do.”

Jane says that, as a result of the Children Come First programme, she now tries much harder to put the children’s wishes first.

“I’m now listening much more to what my kids have to say and trying to incorporate their ideas into what we’re doing,” she explains. “They come up with some really terrific ideas of their own for their play.”

Jane believes that putting the children's wishes first has helped them developmentally.

"They've become much more involved in their play," she says. "They've got more self-esteem and more confidence in their own ideas."

Jane was assessed for her award by Michelle McNicholl, the co-ordinator of the childminding network. Michelle is full of praise for Jane.

"Jane takes very seriously the development of the children in her care," she says. "Anytime I go to visit Jane, she's doing something different with them – whether it's baking, making play-doh or painting."

Jane is also very enthusiastic about the benefits of belonging to the network.

"It provides a lot of different training opportunities," she says. "You also get nights out with the other childminders – it's a great chance to get together."

"And you get ideas from the other childminders which helps to make sure that your own approach to childminding doesn't become stale."

If you would like more information on childminding as a career or on choosing a childminder, go to: www.nicma.org or contact NICMA on 028 9181 1015. For more information on the Coleraine Sure Start/NICMA childminding network, contact Michelle McNicholl on 7032 1040.

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Editor's notes:

1. NICMA – the Childminding Association is a charity, and is the sole organisation representing childminders in Northern Ireland. 74% of registered childminders here are members. For more details about NICMA, please go to: www.nicma.org
2. **Photo caption: Jane McCafferty with Adam Warke (9) who's clearly enjoyed licking the bowl after a baking session.**
3. For further details, please contact Liz Fawcett, Liz Fawcett Consulting on 028 9020 0811 or 0771 943 5662.

