

Dear [candidate],

My name is [name]. I have been a foster carer for [number] years/months and have offered [insert number if you wish] children and young people a safe, loving and nurturing home when they couldn't live with their birth families.

Fostering families such as mine develop long-lasting relationships that will provide care-experienced children and young people with the stability, security and protection they need to be able to thrive throughout their childhood and beyond.

The number of children in care is continuing to rise each year. 100,437 children were in the care system in the UK in 2023, that is one child coming into care every 15 minutes. Three quarters of these children live in a foster family.

Foster carers have a unique role within the children's sector – we are some of the only individuals who provide care for children in their own homes, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year, and welcome them into our families. But we do not have enough foster carers.

For example, in England, since 2019 the number of fostering households has decreased by two per cent while the number of children in care has risen by seven per cent. This is 1,045 less fostering households than in 2019 but 5,690 more children in care.

We need enough highly skilled foster families locally that can care for children where they need them. In England alone, 21 per cent of children were moved over 20 miles from home, 37 per cent were separated from their siblings, and one third of children in residential care had foster care on their care plan when they came into care. This means many children are living somewhere that does not meet all their needs.

As prospective parliamentary candidate for [your constituency] constituency, I am calling on you to commit to the urgent action set out in The Fostering Network's [manifesto](#) and ask your political party to support these pledges.

This manifesto sets out the need to focus on care experienced children and young people, support fostering families and invest and reform in the wider system supporting care experienced children and young people. With the right support, every child and young person with care experience can thrive in foster care.

I would love to meet with you in person to discuss the need for more foster carers in your area and explore how you can commit to taking bold, urgent action to tackle the wider challenges children, young people and foster carers are facing ahead of the General Election.

I look forward to hearing from you soon.