

## Request

A 2021 Ofsted report warned: *"The number of foster carers in England has only increased by 4% since 2014, while the number of children in foster care has increased some 11%. And while the number of fostering households and carers has gone up, Ofsted research suggests that the range of carers available aren't always able to meet children's increasingly complex needs."*

Since the Ofsted report, the cost of living crisis has impacted particularly hard on disabled people, including children, and those who support them, partly because of additional needs, including specialist equipment which may require power.

Academic research has also found that specialist foster care for disabled children and young people reaps dividends for them, but that foster carers can struggle with increased costs of support, difficulties in navigating the benefits system and accessing appropriate care.

- 1) Please provide figures for the number of children in your area in foster care who have additional needs, such as SEN, or who are described as having a disability and provide those figures from 2019-2022 inclusive.
- 2) Please provide figures for the number of foster carers in your area providing care for children and young people who have such additional needs from 2019-2022 inclusive.
- 3) Please give details of the reasons that foster carers quitting the sector have given your council from 2019-2022, with particular emphasis on reasons around not enough support, financial and otherwise, for their work with children and young people with additional needs.

## Response

- 1) 157 children who had 1 or more Foster Care Placements over the period of 1/1/2019 to 31/12/22 AND have a Disability marker recorded.
- 2) 171 Foster Carers provided placements for the children identified above.
- 3) Reasons given for leaving fostering have been as follows: relocation to other areas of the UK, health issues, retirement, moving to paid employment, changes in family caring commitments.