



Reading is what's called an outlier in terms of the number of children in care per 10,000 population when compared to our statistical neighbours

"This means the number of children looked after is higher than elsewhere."



Ms Glassbrook added that Brighter Futures are analysing the root cause for this, as well as putting more emphasis on their early help work in the community to reduce the numbers.

"Often, children have to be placed outside Reading and we are working hard to reduce this," she said.

"What we – and the children we look after – need is for more Reading people to come forward to become foster carers.

"Finding more local foster carers would be much better for our children and young people in terms of disruption and to be able to keep – wherever it's safe to do so – local ties with family, friends, and school.

"Becoming a foster family can be challenging but it's unbelievably rewarding and offers stability and security when it's needed most.

"If you are interested in becoming a foster carer with us, we'd love to hear from you.

"Please email foster@brighterfuturesforchildren.org or call us on 0118 469 3020."

Cllr Judith Blake, chairwoman of the LGA's Children and Young People Board, said: "These figures show the sheer scale of the unprecedented demand pressures on children's services and the care system this decade.

"This is unsustainable.

"Councils want to make sure that children can get the best, rather than just get by, and that means investing in the right services to reach them at the right time.

"Councils need to be given a seat at the table for the care system review, alongside children, families and partners, to make sure this looks at what really matters and what can really make a difference.

"It needs to ensure that children's services are fully funded and councils can not only support those children who are in care, but provide the early intervention and prevention support that can stop children and families reaching crisis point in the first place."

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