

KinshipCareAlliance



Priorities for the Next Government

The **Kinship Care Alliance** is a group of organisations with a shared belief that when children and young people cannot remain at home with their birth parents, they are best raised by family and friends – kinship carers. We believe that all kinship families should receive the right support and help so that children in kinship care are able to thrive in safe, loving homes within their family network.

Kinship carers raise more than 180,000 children across the UK, keeping children connected to the people who love them and often preventing them from entering or remaining in local authority care. However, many kinship carers do so without adequate support or recognition. As a result, they and their children often experience significant practical, financial and emotional challenges, including navigating what can be complex family relationships.

In the 2024 General Election, there is an important opportunity for political parties to recognise the value of kinship care and the unique challenges which kinship families face, and to step up and commit to delivering radical reform and much-needed change for kinship families.

The next Government should prioritise:

1. Introducing new primary legislation which delivers a coherent legislative framework for kinship care across the child welfare and family justice systems, consistent with the new government definition.
2. Significantly enhancing support for kinship families, ensuring that available support reflects family needs and isn't determined simply by legal order, postcode or the child's journey into kinship care.
3. Making sure that kinship care options are always explored, and suitably and fairly assessed, before a child becomes looked after, unless there is an emergency, and that families are involved in making decisions about a child's care.
4. Recognising the racial disparities within kinship care and taking steps to ensure reforms address the unique experiences of kinship families from black and minority ethnic communities.
5. Delivering improved data collection on kinship care to inform local and national policy-making and increasing the visibility of kinship families.
6. Placing the views and experiences of kinship families and the communities they're a part of at the heart of policymaking, recognising their expertise and how it can contribute to building a better system.
7. Providing local authorities with sufficient long-term funding so they can deliver their duties and invest in pioneering new practice and culture change to better support kinship families.

We ask all candidates, if elected, to show your commitment to kinship families in your constituency by:

- asking a parliamentary question about the implementation of the national Kinship Care Strategy
- asking for a Westminster Hall debate about supporting kinship families
- joining the All Party Parliamentary Group on Kinship Care
- writing to the leader of your council asking about what actions they are taking to support kinship families

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