[MP’s Name]

[MP’s constituency office address]

[Date]

Dear [MP’s Name],

**Urgent Concerns Regarding the Department for Education’s New Rules for Agency Child Social Workers – Impact on [Your Local Area]**

I am writing as a concerned constituent to express my deep alarm over the Department for Education’s (DfE) recently introduced rules governing agency child social workers. These rules risk causing significant disruption to social care in [Your Local Area], harming local businesses, and most crucially, jeopardising the wellbeing of vulnerable children in our community.

The [Recruitment & Employment Confederation (REC)](https://www.rec.uk.com/about-the-rec), the leading trade body for the recruitment industry, which my local company, [Company name], based in [Location] is a member of, has engaged extensively with the DfE to highlight the serious risks these rules could present. However, key issues remain unresolved. As my elected representative, I urge you to raise these concerns in Parliament and advocate for a reconsideration of the rules during their implementation phase before they cause lasting harm. In February this year there were over 4,000 vacancies in the social care sector nationally, and failing to address these issues will see this number increase, not reduce it.

**Key Concerns:**

1. **Potentially Discriminatory Post-Qualification Experience (PQE) Requirement** - The three-year PQE requirement in English local authorities may inadvertently discriminate based on nationality, gender, disability, and age, further reducing the pool of available social workers in [Your Local Area]. As an example of this in practice we have seen [specific example of a worker who has been unable to continue as a care worker due to the changes].
2. **Unworkable Notice Periods for Agency Workers** - Imposing notice periods on agency workers contradicts their employment status and could lead to lengthy and costly legal disputes. Disputes of this nature would detract from workers and care provider's ability to provide necessary services to their users. This measure should be reconsidered to prevent unnecessary instability in local social care teams and ensuring the quality of provision your constituents receive remains undisrupted.
3. **Harmful and Unclear Pay Caps** - Unclear regional pay caps may allow wealthier areas to monopolise talent, leaving vulnerable children in [Your Local Area] at risk of losing access to experienced social workers. Pay structures must reflect actual costs and be regularly reviewed.

These changes overall are drastically impacting recruitment and retention of staff in the social work sector. Since the introduction of these rules, we have seen [number of staff] forced out of the sector, as they are unable or unwilling to comply with the rules. This is a profound and damaging impact on children’s social care in [Your Local Area]. The actions of the DfE threaten to worsen workforce shortages, create legal uncertainty, and introduce potentially discriminatory barriers for professionals. Most concerningly, they risk leaving some of the most vulnerable children in our community without the support they desperately need.

**How can you help?**

I urge you to raise these issues with the Secretary of State for Education and push for a reconsideration of these rules before they are fully implemented. A more measured, consultative approach is essential to ensure the best outcomes for children in care.

You may wish to submit one of the following sample Parliamentary Questions:

* *To ask the Secretary of State for Education whether the Department consider introducing a phased transition with an evaluation in early 2025 to ensure minimal disruption to social care services in [Your Local Area]?*
* *To ask the Secretary of State for Education whether what use is the Department making of existing social care workforce data from other UK regions to inform the proposed policy changes in relation to Children’s social care?*
* *To ask the Secretary of State for Education whether the Department of Education has conducted an equality impact assessment on whether the proposed job mapping definitions may disproportionately disadvantage younger social workers in [Your Local Area]?*
* *To ask the Secretary of State for Education that given the uncertainty around IR35 compliance for project teams, what guidance will the Department provide to ensure that agencies operating in [Your Local Area] can remain tax-compliant while delivering essential social care services?*
* *To ask the Secretary of State for Education what contingency plans does the Department have if the cool-off period leads to a shortfall of social workers in local authorities such as [Your Local Area]?*

The REC, representing thousands of companies like mine, would welcome the opportunity to discuss this issue with you further. I look forward to your response outlining how you will advocate for our local community on this matter, which directly affects some of the most vulnerable children in our area.

If you have any questions, please contact patrick.milnes@rec.uk.com

Best wishes,

[Your Name]