

Chambers & Partners 2014

31st October 2013

We are delighted to announce that we have a record 29 barristers recommended in this year's Guide. "This set has a wealth of talent and has firmly established itself as a leading set for family law." Solicitors say of the barristers "They are very innovative in their approach and very holistic in their advice."

This set houses a wealth of talent and has firmly established itself as a leading set for family law. Complex public and private children disputes are areas in which it particularly excels, and it enjoys a fine track record for cases concerning child abduction, child protection and international relocation. In addition, 4 Paper Buildings is also routinely sought after to handle high-value matrimonial disputes. Solicitors say of the barristers here that they are "very innovative in their approach and very holistic in their advice."

Client service: The clerking team, under senior clerk Michael Reeves, receives ample praise from the market, with one source commenting: "They have the best clerks in the business - their clerking is head and shoulders above the rest."

SILKS

Henry Setright QC

Continues to be regarded by market sources as pre-eminent in international children matters, especially child abduction cases.

Expertise: "Superb and very good with clients." "He is excellent in cases requiring technical aspects of the law."

Recent work: Appeared in *Quila Bibi and Aguila v SSHD*, a watershed case in the Supreme Court concerning forced marriage and restrictions on marriages for under-21s. The case has been instrumental in changing English law, causing the abandonment of UK immigration policy regarding restrictions on entry for that class.

Alex Verdán QC

Remains one of the most celebrated barristers doing children work and is well versed in the most complex private and public law cases.

Expertise: "He is sublime. He is fantastic in court and his bedside manner is second to none. If he has a difficult children case, he is very caring and understanding. Added to this, he is an absolute fighter in court."

Jo Delahunty QC

Specialises in children law. She has handled some complex and often controversial disputes involving child death, and ritualised and sexual abuse.

Expertise: “Superb. She has one of the sharpest brains I know, and is very forensic and tactical.”
“Exceptional. She works incredibly hard, is excellent at cross-examination and great at presenting a case at court.”

Recent work: Delahunty represented a teenage mother who was falsely accused of inflicting multiple fractures to a newborn baby, killing him by shaking/impact. The case involved cross-examining 40 medics and 16 experts.

Marcus Scott-Manderson QC

Maintains an excellent track record in cross-border child abduction cases.

Expertise: “Has a detailed knowledge of technical aspects of law and is a well-respected international children practitioner.”

Recent work: Successfully argued a test case on the conflict between ECJ and English definitions of habitual residence in the context of Hague Convention abduction.

Michael Sternberg QC

Comes much recommended for his broad-ranging family law practice and draws much praise for his work in both high-value ancillary relief matters and complex child cases.

Expertise: “An excellent QC to work with. He’s very meticulous, provides lots of feedback and works well as part of a team.”

Catherine Wood QC

Has gone from strength to strength since taking silk in 2011 and is particularly noted for her efforts in serious private law children cases, especially those concerning sexual abuse and parental alienation.

Expertise: “A great advocate. She manages clients’ expectations and achieves good results. She’s very focused, very organised – the all-round package.”

Teertha Gupta QC

Has thrived since taking silk in 2012 and is highly respected for his work on cross-jurisdictional children cases.

Expertise: “A joy to work with, he’s knowledgeable and so very on the ball. He focuses on issues in order to ensure he gets a result for the client.” “He’s always available to talk and is very innovative in his solutions to problems.”

Recent work: Appeared on behalf of CAFCAS in the Supreme Court in Re: T. He successfully persuaded the Law Lords that the Court of Appeal was wrong in its analysis that costs follow the event in care cases.

Jonathan Cohen QC

In addition to having a highly esteemed matrimonial finance practice, Cohen is also noted for his wealth of experience in serious children cases.

Expertise: “Sometimes it’s difficult to justify the cost of a silk, but he’s worth every penny.”

David Williams QC

Has established himself as a go-to advocate for Hague Convention matters, and is particularly noted for his strengths in cases involving abductions and reciprocal enforcement.

Expertise: "A favourite for complex jurisdictional disputes, he knows the technical issues really well."

Recent work: Successfully handled a case in the Court of Appeal regarding the proper interpretation of 'habitual residence' in Hague Convention cases.

JUNIORS

Barbara Mills

Excels in international children cases and is especially noted for her expertise in matters relating to surrogacy and adoption.

Expertise: "Tells it exactly how it is: she is very straight, very sensible and calm." "Her attention to detail is great."

Recent work: Successfully acted for a father who is the respondent in a private law case brought by a mother who wanted to relocate to Brazil with the parties' child. The matter involved issues concerning a shared residence order for the child, as well as religious and cultural factors, the impracticality of contact and a review of the case law.

Charles Hale

Elicits much acclaim for his work on both the matrimonial finance and children law sides, and is routinely sought out for his strengths on high-value divorce cases and large-scale cross-jurisdictional children disputes.

Expertise: "His delivery is well judged and he is very easy to work with. He inspires a lot of confidence."

Recent work: Hale acted on behalf of the Grandparents Association in a widely publicised Supreme Court appeal regarding the liability of a local authority to pay the costs of a party to care proceedings.

Justine Johnston

Represents a fine choice of counsel for matters pertaining to residence and contact, and is widely respected for her expertise on international matters.

Expertise: "She is absolutely fantastic. She is very thorough in the way she prepares and executes her arguments. I always walk into court in the knowledge that with Justine as my barrister I will get first-class representation."

Samantha King

Draws much praise for her work in complex care cases, including those matters concerning sexual abuse and parents/children with mental health problems.

Expertise: "Outstanding. She's a brilliant advocate, who is incredibly bright and good at handling clients. She is just your dream counsel."

Christopher Hames

Maintains a fine track in cases concerning cross-jurisdictional issues, child abduction, adoption, abandoned spouses and lawful relocation.

Expertise: "Has excellent knowledge of all areas of family law matters."

Recent work: Recently handled child abduction proceedings in the High Court involving five children, three of whom were returned to Spain.

Jane Probyn

Wins plaudits for her work in private and public children law cases, particularly those relating to physical, sexual and emotional abuse.

Expertise: "A very sound and sensible advocate, who will always impress a judge."

John Tughan

Represents children, parents and local authorities, among others, in complex and high-profile care cases, and enjoys a fine reputation for his work on matters pertaining to death, injury and sexual abuse.

Expertise: "He is focused and tenacious - a real fighter and an excellent advocate."

Alison Grief

Principally focuses on public law disputes and is well versed in all areas of children matters, from deaths and non-accidental injuries to fabricated/induced illness and sexual abuse cases.

Expertise: "Absolutely phenomenal, she's an expert in her field. She makes you feel like you are with a heavy hitter. Watching her perform in court is amazing."

Michael Gratton

Continues to go from strength to strength in the children law arena and is being increasingly sought after to handle cases concerning international abduction, international and domestic relocation, and forced marriage.

Expertise: "He has a quality of practice that is well beyond his call. He is loved by judges, is a delightful opponent and is forensically really mature."

Recent work: Acted for the biological mother in connection with a case concerning two children conceived by insemination by an anonymous donor during the parties' lesbian relationship. During the course of the proceedings that followed, the shared residence order previously granted to the non-biological mother had been discharged. The mother appealed, and the order was overturned.

Robin Barda

Comes highly recommended for his representation of parents, children and guardians in cases relating to child abduction, relocation and public law.

Expertise: One solicitor commented: "He knows more about family law than some of the judges."

Joy Brereton

Highly experienced in private and public law children work and is especially recognised for her work regarding adoption and child relocation. She also handles cases involving issues for consideration such as education and religion.

Recent work: Featured in a high-profile case involving a decision concerning the upbringing of five children from the Chassidic community. This concerned a disagreement between the parents over the education of the children which would entirely affect their whole way of life and rules for living.

Elizabeth Couch

Has developed a much-admired practice focusing on private law cases and Children Act Schedule 1 disputes.

Expertise: “She has tenacity and knows what she is doing – she prepares cases very thoroughly.”

Hassan Khan

Enjoys a fine reputation for his work in cross-jurisdiction children matters, particularly those concerning child abduction, surrogacy and forced marriage.

Expertise: “I use him a lot for cases with complex issues; he sits down and gives 100% effort and dedication. He is good to work with and really approachable.”

Cyrus Larizadeh

Commonly called upon to handle high-profile and complex sexual abuse and non-accidental injury matters.

Expertise: “Very good; he is a calm and competent advocate.”

Judith Murray

In addition to her strength in children cases, she is highly esteemed in the matrimonial finance arena, and handles complex and high-value cross-border matters.

Expertise: “She has been excellent, and is very good with clients. She is very tough and deals with everything really well. She is also great on her feet.”

Samantha Woodham

Debuts in the rankings this year and is gaining much recognition for her work relating to financial remedy cases and trusts of land applications.

Expertise: “A star of the future, who gives her all to clients and works incredibly hard to get the right result.”

Mark Jarman

A new entrant in the rankings this year, who is noted for his handling of high-profile cases concerning abduction and the international movement of children.

Expertise: “He knows the law and will put together good arguments at really short notice.”

Recent work: Recently appealed in the Court of Appeal in Re: J, a Hague abduction case.

Jacqueline Renton

Seen as a rising star in cross-jurisdiction children matters, and has been frequently sought after to handle cases relating to child abduction, relocation and international custody/access.

Expertise: “She has an excellent practice and is wise beyond her years of call.”

Brian Jubb

Comes recommended for his representation of local authorities, parents and guardians in public children cases.

Expertise: “He is a charming man and a safe pair of hands. He presents cases in a fair way and will always work hard and do things decently.”

Recent work: Handled a case looking at the legality of a local authority’s plan to remove a child from its mother immediately after birth without informing the mother of the intention to do so.