

Barbara Mills KC

Head of Chambers

'Barbara is extraordinarily insightful and has an unmatched ability to identify the real issues in a case and address them head-on. Her written and oral advocacy is forceful and persuasive, and she always has the respect and ear of any tribunal.'

Legal 500

Experience

Year of Call: 1990

Year of Silk: 2020

Practice Areas

- International Children Law
- Private Children Law
- Public Children Law

Dispute Resolution

- Arbitration
- Collaborative Law
- Mediation
- Private FDR and Early Neutral Evaluation

Direct Access

Direct Access

Education

LLB (Hull)

Qualified Collaborative Lawyer

Trained Family Mediator (offering Child Inclusive Mediation)

Trained Arbitrator (children)

Appointments

Recorder 2012

Governing Bencher for Inner Temple 2021

Deputy High Court Judge 2023

Vice Chair of the Bar Council of England and Wales 2024



Profile

Joint Head of Chambers of 4PB, the leading Family Law barristers Chambers in the UK, Barbara is a specialist family practitioner with an emphasis in Children cases. She is regularly instructed by Local Authorities and Guardians in complex care proceedings. In addition, she has extensive experience advising and acting for parties in private law proceedings often with an international element in the High Court. Barbara is an experienced family mediator, collaboratively trained counsel and offers Early Neutral Evaluation (private judging)

Memberships

Family Law Bar Association
Association of Women Barristers
Association of Lawyers for Children
Fellow of the International Academy of Family Lawyers
Central London Collaborative Forum
South Eastern Circuit
Affiliate Member of Resolution

Recommendations

"Barbara is an ideal children specialist barrister. She is very user friendly and has a real gift for engaging with her clients. Barbara fights hard for her clients and never gives up on a good cause. These qualities combined with a bright disposition mean that Barbara is much in demand. She is also an enthusiastic supporter of alternative dispute resolution in family law."

Gillian Bishop – Family law in Partnership

"Barbara has done some very good Children Act work for me where she she has gone the extra mile and provided tremendous client service. She is also very approachable and organised. I wouldnt hesitate to use her again other cases!"

Suzanne Kingston – Withers

"One of the leading children law practitioners in London, who will fight her corner impeccably against any silk. With an intuitive understanding of what makes client's tick, and an incisive view of the way the judicial wind is blowing, she is always at the top of my list."

John Nicholson – Irwin Mitchell (London)

"Barbara is a knowledgeable and personable Barrister but above all an outstanding advocate"

David Jane

"One day there will be a means for hooking Barbara up to the national grid and the energy crisis will be solved. Her delivery to clients, in the meantime is wise and calm and they benefit from knowing that she is on top of every aspect of their case and totally committed to their goals. The support for instructing lawyers is efficient and supportive. May be we should run a poll for cinematic similes ... Warrant Officer Ripley ?"

James Pirrie – Family Law in Partnership

Directories

"She grapples with really difficult and challenging issues, and is not someone to shy away from making difficult decisions."

"She arbitrated very judicially – she was very even-handed and grasped the issues very well."

"Barbara is extremely professional and child focused."

Family/Matrimonial: ADR - Chambers and Partners, 2024

“Barbara is a heavyweight, who is really punchy and completely lives and breathes the work.”

“Barbara is truly a one-of-a-kind advocate. Her impressive experience and clear strategy come together to deliver excellent results.

Family: Children - Chambers and Partners, 2024

Barbara is extraordinarily insightful and has an unmatched ability to identify the real issues in a case and address them head-on. Her written and oral advocacy is forceful and persuasive, and she always has the respect and ear of any tribunal.’

‘Barbara thoroughly prepares for cases and has a clear grasp of complex issues. She is an expert in children’s law and empathetic to parents in difficult and stressful situations.’

Legal 500, 2024

“Barbara Mills is a phenomenal advocate for clients, who is all over the details.”

“She’s incredibly emotionally intelligent and represents her client’s best interests at all times.”

Chambers and Partners, 2023

‘Barbara is always well prepared and able to get to grips with the issues quickly. Her advocacy is wonderfully clear and concise. She is not scared to say difficult things to powerful people when required.’

Legal 500, 2023

Highly regarded family barrister with recognised expertise in private children proceedings, who often assists clients with cross-border cases in the High Court. She also has equal strength in domestic child disputes, involving welfare issues. Mills demonstrates further expertise in mediation and is a private judge.

Strengths: “She is laser-sharp with her questioning of the client and is all over the papers.” “Incredibly good at children work involving parties with emotional or psychological difficulties.” “Barbara has excellent judgement and is compassionate with clients while delivering clear advice to them.”

Chambers & Partners, 2021

‘Unflappable, measured and incisive. Warm and naturally intuitive, she is liked and admired by opponents and Judges as well as her instructing solicitors and clients. A powerful court presence, and a smooth, clear and punchy advocate.’

Legal 500, 2021

Highly regarded family barrister with recognised expertise in private children proceedings, who often assists clients with cross-border cases in the High Court. She also has equal strength in domestic child disputes, involving welfare issues. Mills demonstrates further expertise in mediation and is a private judge.

Strengths: “Barbara is utterly incredible. She really knows her stuff and she gives excellent advice in difficult and emotional circumstances. Clients take it from her because she knows what she’s talking about.” “She’s a tenacious, effective advocate and a match for anyone of a similar call.”

Chambers & Partners 2020

Band 1

‘Is wholly reliable and a silk in the making.’

Legal 500, 2020
Top Tier

Highly regarded family barrister with recognised expertise in private children proceedings, in particular cross-border cases in the High Court. She also has equal strength in domestic child disputes, involving issues of welfare and parental alienation. Mills further demonstrates strength in mediation and is a private judge.

Strengths: "A complete superstar whose paperwork, advocacy and judgement are flawless." "Supremely sensible and tough when necessary, she is very straight with her clients and strong in court."

Chambers & Partners 2019
Band 1

'Great on detail but never loses sight of the bigger picture.'

Legal 500, 2019
Top Tier

Highly regarded family barrister with recognised expertise in private children proceedings, in particular cross-border cases in the High Court. She also demonstrates strength in mediation and is a private judge. She earns consistent praise for her ability to connect with every client.

Strengths: "She's a brilliant advocate. She's good with the most difficult of clients and her presentation in court is second to none."

Chambers & Partners 2018
Band 1

'She couples the ability to be appropriately tenacious with a down-to-earth pragmatism.' **Legal 500, 2017**
Top Tier

Highly regarded family barrister with recognised expertise in private children proceedings, in particular cross-border cases in the High Court. She also demonstrates strength in mediation and is a private judge. Strengths: "Her preparation is excellent, her cross-examination is second to none and she is absolutely magical in court."

Recent work: Represented the father in contested proceedings concerning the future care of a seven year old girl. The case involved allegations of maternal mental health, drug misuse, and both domestic and physical violence against the girl.

Chambers & Partners 2017 - Band 1

"She has an ability to quietly destroy the other side's case."

Legal 500, 2016 - Top Tier

A senior junior of choice for complex private children matters, who wins plaudits from sources for her commitment and client empathy. She is also a collaborative lawyer offering mediation and early neutral evaluation.

Strengths: "She really is leader quality at junior prices." "Enormously capable when it comes to complex Children Act matters at all levels; she's measured, sensible and tells it how it is."

Chambers & Partners 2016 - Band 1

'Very persuasive on her feet.'

The Legal 500 2015

Has great experience and a deservedly strong reputation for her work in private law children proceedings. She deals principally with international relocations and cases relating to same-sex families.

Expertise: "She clearly knows the law well and has a good, sensible down-to-earth approach. She works very well with clients." "She's measured and sensible, and tells it how it is."

Chambers & Partners 2015 - Band 1

Barbara Mills - 'An excellent strategist, and a joy to work with.'
Recommended as a Leading Family Junior in the area of Children Law

The Legal 500, 2014

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.

Chambers & Partners 2014 - Band 1

Barbara Mills is 'frighteningly intelligent'.
Recommended as a Leading Family Junior in the area of Children Law

Legal 500, 2013

The "utterly superb" Barbara Mills concentrates her family law practice on children cases, and has a noted specialism in matters concerning surrogacy and adoption. Interviewees note that she can "carry clients with her and persuade them of the right course," and describe her as being excellent when handling "stressful, nasty disputes."

Chambers & Partners 2013

Barbara Mills is 'first port of call on contact, residence and relocation disputes'

The Legal 500 2012

Barbara Mills, "a very calm and clear player" who regularly handles international children matters including leave to remove cases. Sources applaud her sensible and practical approach.

Chambers & Partners 2012

Barbara Mills is "a high-class performer" who is often instructed by blue-chip solicitors in complex Children Act disputes. She is emblematic of the quality at a set.

Chambers & Partners 2011

Cases

21/02/2023	Re C ('Parental Alienation': Instruction of Expert) (2023)	Barbara Mills KC Charles Hale KC Joy Brereton KC Chris Barnes Charlotte Baker Frankie Shama	[2023] EWHC 345 (Fam)
30/03/2021	Re H-N and Others (Children) (Domestic Abuse: Finding of fact hearings)	Christopher Hames KC Charlotte Baker Jo Delahunty KC Chris Barnes Charles Hale KC Adele Cameron-Douglas Rebecca Foulkes Miriam Best Teertha Gupta KC Matthew Persson Clarissa Wigoder Mark Jarman KC Michael Gration KC Barbara Mills KC Joy Brereton KC Emma Spruce	[2021] EWCA Civ 448
18/12/2015	H v C & Ors [2015]	Barbara Mills KC Judith Murray KC	[2015] EWCA Civ 1298
01/09/2010	R (A Child)	Barbara Mills KC	[2010] EWCA Civ 1137
10/09/2008	Re F-H (Children) (2008)	Alex Verdan KC Alistair G Perkins Barbara Mills KC	(2009) 1 FLR 349; [2008] EWCA Civ 1249
30/07/2008	Re A (Joint Residence: Parental Responsibility)	Kate Branigan KC Barbara Mills KC	[2008] 2 FLR 1593
20/05/2008	Re W (Children) (2008)	Barbara Mills KC	[2008] 2 FLR 1170 [2008] EWCA Civ 538
16/11/2005	K and S (Children) (2005)	Barbara Mills KC	[2005] EWCA Civ 1660
21/10/2005	Portsmouth NHS Trust v Wyatt	Barbara Mills KC	[2006] 1 FLR 652
22/12/1998	Re G (A Child) (1999)	Barbara Mills KC	[2000] 2 FLR 259
27/10/1997	A v L (Contact)	Barbara Mills KC	[1998] 1 FLR 361
15/08/1997	Re R (Disclosure)	Barbara Mills KC	[1998] 1 FLR 433