

Chris Barnes

'Chris is a brilliant advocate, who goes over and above for his clients. His calm, confident and robust approach means his client's case is put in the best possible way.'

Chambers and Partners, 2025

'Chris is a compelling advocate. He builds strong relationships with clients, and can explain the most complex of issues in a straightforward way.'

Legal 500, 2025



Experience

Year of Call: 2008

Practice Areas

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

Direct Access

Direct Access





Family Law
Awards 2021
LexisNexis

Headline Partner



**SHORTLISTED FOR:
FAMILY LAW CASE OF THE YEAR**

Qualifications

MA (Cantab) History
GDL
BVC

Education

St John's College, Cambridge (2003-6)
City University (2006/7)
Inns of Court School of Law (2007/8)

Profile

Chris specialises in proceedings relating to children whether public, private or international. He is regularly instructed – both in his own right and as a led junior – by local authorities, parents, guardians and other interested parties at all levels including the Family Court, High Court and Court of Appeal.

Chris has been involved in a number of high profile cases concerning contested adoption, the relinquishment of children and risk of radicalisation and his work was recognised as Family Law Junior Barrister of the Year at the Jordan Publishing Family Law Awards 2016.

Chris' practice covers the full range of cases concerning children whether in the course of local authority initiated proceedings or in private applications. His practise encompasses cases of the utmost gravity – including sexual abuse and serious inflicted injuries – alongside those with novel or contentious legal issue. He brings his experience, sensitivity and commitment to bear in ensuring that his clients – whether parents, professionals or others – are supported and represented through the litigation process.

Chris has been at the forefront of a number of cases concerning the risk of radicalisation in a family law context and has experience of representing both local authorities and parents. He was instructed in one of the first cases to use wardship in the context of teenage girls said to be at risk of travelling to Syria. He has an extensive knowledge of the issues involved as well as experience of contested applications concerning disclosure of sensitive material and reporting restrictions.

In his work relating to adoption Chris has been instructed in a number of contentious adoption application and has been involved in long-running adoption proceedings, acting for a father seeking the rehabilitation of his daughter, heard by the President over 3-weeks following two hearings in the Court of Appeal. He has also developed a specialism in cases concerning relinquished infants where he has acted for, and advised, local authorities as well as having represented family members.

Chris is a reviewer and undertakes work for the Bar Pro Bono unit and is committed to ensuring that where his clients may be more vulnerable – by virtue of language, disability or geographical location – are properly protected and represented before the Court.

Chris writes and lectures regularly with a particular focus on public law proceedings, adoption and radicalisation.

Away from work Chris is a dedicated runner: he ran the 2016 London Marathon on behalf of St John Ambulance and is a regular parkrunner. (www.parkrun.com)

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Memberships

Honourable Society of Gray's Inn
Family Law Bar Association
Association of Lawyers for Children

Directories

'Chris is a compelling advocate. He builds strong relationships with clients, and can explain the most complex of issues in a straightforward way.'

Legal 500, 2025

"Chris is a brilliant advocate, who goes over and above for his clients. His calm, confident and robust approach means his client's case is put in the best possible way."

"Instructing him is like instructing a silk as he's really clever and really tactically astute. He's quietly formidable – when I see other barristers around him, they pale in comparison."

"Chris is calm, intelligent and articulate. His advocacy is excellent and he is wonderfully adept at explaining complex concepts to vulnerable clients. A real go-to barrister for children work."

Chambers and Partners, 2025

"He is an absolute powerhouse, who is willing to go out of his way for clients."

"He is creative in his thinking and doesn't miss an opportunity to challenge the other side's position."

"Chris is an excellent all-rounder. His knowledge of the law is flawless, but it is his compassion and care with clients that is most impressive."

Chambers and Partners, 2024

'Chris is academically sharp, thoughtful and insightful with his cases. He relishes the law and is committed to making sure it progresses to reflect society. He is excellent to work with as part of a team – pleasant yet oozing confidence.'

Legal 500, 2024

"A very bright and extremely impressive junior, who has very good client skills and is really good on the law. He's nice to work with."

"Chris is an excellent barrister, who's incredibly knowledgeable about the law and has a personable, calm and sensitive approach with clients, including very vulnerable people."

Chambers and Partners, 2023

'Chris is a very experienced and highly effective children's junior with a formidable track record of experience and success in dealing with complex, cutting-edge public law cases with an international dimension. His knowledge of the law and procedure is encyclopedic, and his intellectual agility is matched by a forceful yet pragmatic approach that makes him attractive to specialist solicitors, not least to those at local authorities and other institutional clients.'

Legal 500, 2023

"He's hard-working and absolutely dedicated to his clients." "He handles detailed, complex cases with alacrity and ease." "Chris is clever, calm, approachable and collaborative. He always responds to queries or requests for help as quickly as he can."

Recent work: Represented the local authority in an appeal concerning a child who was vaccinated while in care. The main issue was whether a local authority with a care order could vaccinate a child despite parental objections.

Chambers & Partners, 2022

'A talented junior unafraid to take on cases from which others might shy away.'

Legal 500, 2022

A well-respected junior who is increasingly well versed in matters concerning the overlap between public law and international children issues. He has additional experience in cases involving radicalisation and also enjoys particular renown for his work in abduction cases.

Strengths: "An extraordinarily prolific advocate who appears in cases against silks unled. He has a demon brain and is a superb cross-examiner."

Recent work: Represented an appellant father in an effort to restrict disclosure to the police of information arising from family proceedings. The information concerned alleged radicalisation of a family who had returned from Syria.

Chambers & Partners, 2021

'A highly intelligent, knowledgeable barrister who is a skilled advocate.'

Legal 500, 2021

A well-respected junior who is increasingly well-versed in matters concerning the overlap between public law and international children issues. He has additional experience in cases involving radicalisation and also enjoys particular renown for his work in abduction cases.

Strengths: "He's highly intelligent and brilliant with clients."

Chambers & Partners 2020

'Highly intelligent and meticulous, he will not leave any stone unturned; a fearless and eloquent advocate.'

Legal 500, 2020

A well-respected junior who is increasingly well versed in matters concerning the overlap between public law and international children issues. He has experience in cases involving contested adoption and relinquished children. He enjoys particular renown for his work in radicalisation cases, and often appears in the High Court.

Strengths: "He's a very good lawyer and an excellent advocate. If there isn't an answer, he'll find one."

Recent work: Represented the local authority in proceedings concerning the risk of radicalisation with regard to a mother and baby who had just returned from Syria.

Chambers & Partners 2019

‘His paperwork is exceptional.’

Legal 500, 2019

A well-respected junior who is increasingly well versed in matters concerning the overlap between public law and international children issues. He has experience in contested adoption, relinquished children and radicalisation cases.

Strengths: “He’s very intelligent and has picked things up and taken cases to places you wouldn’t think they could go. He’s definitely a rising star.”

Chambers & Partners 2018

Cases

| | | | |
|------------|---|--|------------------------|
| 07/10/2024 | London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham v G & Ors | Alison Grief KC Chris Barnes | [2024] EWHC 2200 (Fam) |
| 21/02/2023 | Re C (‘Parental Alienation’; Instruction of Expert) | Barbara Mills KC Charles Hale KC Joy Brereton KC Chris Barnes Charlotte Baker Frankie Shama | [2023] EWHC 345 (Fam) |
| 02/11/2022 | Re B (A Child) | Chris Barnes Charlotte Baker | [2022] EWCA Civ 1439 |
| 10/12/2021 | Griffiths v Tickle & Ors | Deirdre Fottrell KC Chris Barnes Charlotte Baker | [2021] EWCA Civ 1882 |
| 30/07/2021 | Griffiths v Tickle & Ors | Chris Barnes Charlotte Baker | [2021] EWHC 3365 (Fam) |
| 20/07/2021 | Re D (Care Proceedings: 1996 Hague Convention: Article 9 Request) | Henry Setright KC Chris Barnes | [2021] EWHC 1970 (Fam) |
| 13/05/2021 | London Borough of Barnet v AG & Ors | Jo Delahunty KC Chris Barnes Lucy Logan Green | [2021] EWHC 1253 |

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|------------|---|---|------------------------|
| 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 Gratton KC Barbara Mills KC Joy Brereton KC Emma Spruce | [2021] EWCA Civ 448 |
| 18/12/2020 | A Local Authority v A Mother & Ors | Andrew Powell Chris Barnes Harry Langford | [2020] EWHC 3496 (Fam) |
| 24/08/2020 | Re N (Children) (Interim Care) | Chris Barnes | [2020] EWCA Civ 1003 |
| 10/07/2020 | Z (A Child) (DOLS: Lack of Secure Placement) | Chris Stevenson Sam King KC Chris Barnes | [2020] EWHC 1827 (Fam) |
| 10/07/2020 | Z (A Child : DOLS: Lack of Secure Placement) | Dorothea Gartland KC Chris Barnes Sam King KC | [2020] EWHC 1827 (Fam) |
| 04/06/2020 | Re B-T (A Child) (Threshold Conditions) | Alison Grief KC Chris Barnes | [2020] EWCA Civ 697 |
| 28/05/2020 | A Local Authority v AG (No. 2) | Jo Delahunty KC Chris Barnes Lucy Logan Green | [2020] EWHC 1346 (Fam) |
| 22/05/2020 | Re H (A Child) (Parental Responsibility: Vaccination) | Alison Grief KC Rob Littlewood Chris Barnes Harry Langford | [2020] EWCA Civ 664 |
| 07/04/2020 | London Borough of Tower Hamlets v Mother & Ors | Rob Littlewood Chris Barnes Harry Langford | [2020] EWHC 832 (Fam) |
| 03/04/2020 | Prospective adopters v LB Tower Hamlets | Rob Littlewood Chris Barnes Harry Langford | [2020] EWFC 26 |
| 01/04/2020 | Re T (A Child) | Alison Grief KC Chris Barnes Harry Langford Rob Littlewood | [2020] EWHC 220 (Fam) |

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|------------|---|---|--------------------------|
| 03/03/2020 | A Local Authority v AG | Jo Delahunty KC Chris Barnes Lucy Logan Green | [2020] EWFC 18 |
| 28/02/2020 | Re I (Children: Child Assessment Order) | Chris Barnes | [2020] EWCA Civ 281 |
| 07/02/2020 | Re T (A child) | Chris Barnes | [2020] EWHC 220 (Fam) |
| 23/01/2020 | Re T (A Child) | Rob Littlewood Chris Barnes Harry Langford | [2020] EWFC 4 |
| 17/12/2019 | S and T (Children: care orders) | Jo Delahunty KC Chris Barnes Private: Joanne Porter | [2019] EWHC 3851 (Fam) |
| 20/11/2019 | A City Council v A Mother & A Father & Ors (Care Proceedings Radicalisation) | Cyrus Larizadeh KC Chris Barnes Brian Jubb Mani Singh Basi | [2019] EWHC 3076 (Fam) |
| 31/07/2019 | M (Children) | Chris Barnes | [2019] EWCA Civ 1364 |
| 12/06/2019 | Re T (A Child) | Chris Barnes | [2019] EWHC 1572 (Fam) |
| 07/03/2019 | Re Q (Child – Interim Care Order – Jurisdiction) | Chris Barnes | [2019] EWHC 512 (Fam) |
| 14/01/2019 | TAN (a child) (child death; fact finding) | Alison Grief KC Chris Barnes | [2019] EWFC B78 |
| 19/07/2018 | Re ABCDE | Sam King KC Ruth Kirby KC Chris Barnes | [2018] EWHC 1841 (Fam) |
| 10/07/2018 | The Child and Family Agency (Ireland) v M & Ors (Article 15(5) BIIA Transfer Request : CJEU Preliminary Reference: Care Jurisdiction) | Henry Setright KC Chris Barnes | [2018] EWHC 1581 (Fam) |
| 22/06/2018 | A Local Authority v A Mother & Ors (Radicalisation Welfare) | Chris Barnes Cleo Perry KC | [2018] EWHC 2056 (Fam) |
| 06/06/2018 | Secretary of State for the Home Department v IM & Ors | Ruth Kirby KC Chris Barnes | [2018] EWHC 1664 (Admin) |
| 01/05/2018 | CFA (Ireland) v F | Henry Setright KC Chris Barnes | [2018] EWHC 939 (Fam) |
| 05/03/2018 | A Local Authority v Mother & Ors (Radicalisation Fact Finding) | Alison Grief KC Chris Barnes Cleo Perry KC | [2018] EWHC 2054 (Fam) |
| 08/12/2017 | A Local Authority v X, Y and Z (Permission to Withdraw) | Sam King KC Chris Barnes | [2017] EWHC 3741 (Fam) |

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|------------|---|--|------------------------|
| 12/07/2017 | W (A Child - No 4) | Chris Barnes | [2017] EWHC 1760 (Fam) |
| 26/05/2017 | A Local Authority v HB (Alleged Risk of Radicalisation and Abduction) | Private: Oliver Jones Chris Barnes | [2017] EWHC 1437 (Fam) |
| 17/04/2017 | Re W (A Child) (No 2) | Chris Barnes | [2017] EWHC 917 (Fam) |
| 12/04/2017 | Re W (A Child) | Chris Barnes | [2017] EWHC 829 (Fam) |
| 31/03/2017 | Re C (A Child) No. 2 - (Application for Public Interest Immunity) | Alex Verdan KC Chris Barnes | [2017] EWHC 692 (Fam) |
| 31/03/2017 | Re C (A Child) (No 2) (Application for Public Interest Immunity) | Alex Verdan KC Chris Barnes | [2017] EWHC 692 (Fam) |
| 21/03/2017 | HB v A Local Authority and Anor (Wardship - Costs Funding Order) | Charles Hale KC Teertha Gupta KC Private: Oliver Jones Chris Barnes | [2017] EWHC 524 (Fam) |
| 06/03/2017 | Re W (A Child) | Chris Barnes | [2017] EWHC 829 (Fam) |
| 11/01/2017 | Re C (A Child) | Alex Verdan KC Chris Barnes | [2016] EWHC 3171 (Fam) |
| 08/12/2016 | C (A Child) | Alex Verdan KC Chris Barnes | [2016] EWHC 3171 (Fam) |
| 14/10/2016 | Re RA (Baby Relinquished for Adoption) | Alex Verdan KC Kate Branigan KC Chris Barnes | [2016] EWFC 47 |
| 09/09/2016 | Re M (Children) (2016) | Chris Barnes Jane Rayson | [2016] EWCA Civ 937 |
| 13/07/2016 | London Borough Tower Hamlets v B | Alison Grief KC Sam King KC Rebecca Foulkes Chris Barnes | [2016] EWHC 1707 (Fam) |
| 03/03/2016 | Re JL and AO 2016 | Henry Setright KC Chris Barnes | [2016] EWHC 440 (Fam) |
| 11/12/2015 | Re H (A Child) [2015] | Chris Barnes | [2015] EWCA Civ 1284 |
| 21/08/2015 | London Borough of Tower Hamlets v B [2015] | Deirdre Fottrell KC Chris Barnes | [2015] EWHC 2491 (Fam) |
| 20/08/2015 | Re S [2015] | Chris Barnes | [2015] EWHC 4159 (Fam) |
| 22/07/2015 | Re W (Adoption Application: Reunification with Family of Origin) [2015] | Chris Barnes | [2015] EWHC 2039 (Fam) |

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| 02/07/2015 | Re R (A Child) (2015) | Henry Setright KC Sally Bradley Chris Barnes | [2015] EWCA Civ 674 |
| 11/06/2015 | Re H (Children) (2015) | Kate Branigan KC Chris Barnes | [2015] EWCA Civ 583 |
| 27/03/2015 | Tower Hamlets London Borough Council v M & Others | Chris Barnes | [2015] EWHC 869 (Fam) |
| 19/03/2015 | SR (A Child: Habitual Residence) [2015] | Henry Setright KC Sally Bradley Chris Barnes | [2015] EWHC 742 (Fam) |
| 03/12/2014 | X (Discharge of Care Order) | Chris Barnes | [2014] EWFC B217 |
| 20/06/2014 | Local Authority 1 & Others v AF (Mother) & Others [2014] | Sally Bradley Chris Barnes | [2014] EWHC 2042 (Fam) |