DERE STREET BARRISTERS

Claire Middleton



Claire is a family law specialist in the area relating to children and now practises exclusively in the public law arena.

Claire has a wealth of experience in this field and regularly appears in the more complex and serous cases. Claire has a wide experience in cases involving serious injury, and on occasion, the death of a child often involving complex medical evidence; she also has considerable experience in cases involving sexual abuse (including sexual activity between children) and in cases involving fabricated and induced illness.

Claire has a depth of experience in representing a wide range of participants in public law cases regularly appearing for a number of local authorities in the region as well as acting for parents, extended family members and the subject children (either with or without a children's guardian).

Claire has particular experience in representing parties with mental health issues and with cognitive difficulties requiring the services of an intermediary to ensure their full and fair participation in litigation.

Claire appears regularly in the family court at circuit judge and high court judge level.

Claire is approachable, straightforward, communicates well with the parties that she represents and gives sensible advice.
Claire has an attention to detail that ensures a thorough analysis of the relevant issues and an appropriate approach to the cases that she is instructed in; she always has a thorough knowledge of the case papers and is consistent in her detailed preparation for hearings.

In terms of the most serious and complex cases, in the last 12 months, Claire has appeared as trial counsel in cases for clients requiring intermediary assistance on a number of occasions, a case involving very serious injury (a number of fractures and a brain injury) to a child, a case involving international relocation of a child within care proceedings, inter-sibling sexual activity/ sexual abuse on a number of occasions and a case involving FII.

Claire is readily contactable when instructed and responds quickly to requests for advice or written documents.

YEAR OF CALL

1991

AREAS OF PRACTICE

FAMILY

Public & Private Law – Children

Legal500
LEADING JUNIOR
UNITED KINGDOM
2027

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NOTABLE CASES

Appeared in the High Court acting for a child in care proceedings with Court of protection proceedings running in tandem due to the mother's brain injury.

Appeared in the High Court on behalf of the Local Authority in complex sexual abuse matter in which a young child made disclosures against a minor (intervening through the official solicitor) of sexual activity with her, when forensic evidence implicated an adult family member against whom no disclosures had been made.

Appeared in the High Court for a child (directly) who was applying for contact to his father in prison. The Local Authority opposed the application and raised an argument as to the competency of the child to act without a Guardian.

Appeared in the High Court for the local authority seeking an interim care order and assessments of a child with apparent global delays in his cognitive ability, speech and language and who has little contact with adults outside his immediate family.

Appeared in the High Court for the Local Authority as junior counsel in a case concerning the injuries found to an infant upon his death. Highly complex medical evidence involving 10 medical experts from 5 different disciplines.

RE S (A child: no.1) [2015] EWFC 19/ RE S (A child: no.2) [2015] EWFC 20

Appeared for the local authority before the president of the family division, on a re-hearing of a care and placement application, following a successful appeal, where the child had already been placed with the prospective adopters.

Recommendations and client feedback

The Legal 500 2027 – Leading Junior

The Legal 500 2026

'Claire is an excellent advocate; calm and measured and a favourite of judges. She is known for undertaking serious and difficult cases.'

Memberships

Member of the FLBA
Member of the North Eastern Circuit

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Qualifications

University of Newcastle upon Tyne LLB (HONS)
Inns of Court School of Law