



Clare Porter-Phillips

Senior Consultant Barrister



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www.unit.law

Interests

Clare is a mum of four and a regular cake maker. She also has a keen interest in ice hockey and her Cockapoo pups - Dolly and Cooper.

Memberships

Member of Lincoln's Inn

Member of the FLBA

Member of Resolution

Member of the Northern Circuit

Profile

Since commencing practice in 2001, Clare has established herself as one of the leading family law barristers on the Northern Circuit. Clare is widely known as a barrister who brings huge expertise and experience across both public and private law and has represented local authorities, parents, children and interveners. She is well known for her passion, drive and determination to achieve the best outcome for her clients and is highly regarded for her effective and efficient case management. Clare is highly respected for her robust approach and is very mindful of the need to manage expectations in very emotive and difficult situations with sensitivity and care.

In addition, Clare is a trained mediator allowing her to undertake mediation in all types of family proceedings. She fully believes in the value of the mediation process within family litigation and believes that both parties in such cases can greatly benefit from the process as an effective way of agreeing a solution to a dispute, rather than having a solution imposed upon them.

History

2021 - Present | Senior Consultant Barrister, Unit Chambers

2013 - 2020 | St Johns Buildings, Liverpool

2001 - 2013 | White Friars Chambers, Chester (now St Johns Buildings, Chester)

2001 | Called to the Bar

Professional Experience

Public Law:

Clare has a wealth of experience representing local authorities, parents, extended family members, children, the police and interveners in care cases. She has dealt with cases involving extremely severe allegations of neglect, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and non-accidental injury and has full experience with the complex evidence, whether that be medical, police or other, that is involved in such cases. Clare also has expertise in cases involving child abduction, adoption, cases for the official solicitor, clients with vulnerable mental health, special guardianship, long-term foster care placements, residential placements, secure unit, use of intermediaries and interpreters and those cases including parties with serious learning difficulties.

She is a great believer that representing the full scope of parties and interveners who engage in public law proceedings develops a greater understating and depth of knowledge which only serves to benefit the client in the representation they receive.

Private Law:

Clare has a wealth of experience representing parents, extended family, interveners and children in 16.4 applications. She has dealt with highly complex cases involving serious allegations of harm between adults and serious allegations of harm to the child or children. She is equally adept in those cases involving child abduction, the local authority, family assistance orders and child in need plans.

Clare also practices in cases involving domestic and international relocation, complex family dynamics eg blended families, parental hostility and alienation as well as specific issues such as change of name, school, travel arrangements and prohibited steps.

Alternative Dispute Resolution:

Clare has extensive experience in resolving family disputes without the need for litigation. She is highly regarded for her ability to take even the most complex of cases and achieve amicable resolution between the parties for the benefit of the children and the family unit as a whole. Clare prides herself on achieving workable solutions and parenting agreements with clients that bring families together enabling opportunity for effective co-parenting.

Clare's extensive experience enables her to carry out neutral evaluations for those families who in their endeavours to reach agreement need or want the view of an experienced practitioner to help them understand the perimeters of realistic outcomes the court may impose should the matter proceed to court.

A neutral evaluation with Clare affords parties the opportunity to work constructively and collaboratively together. It enables them to take ownership of their own arrangements for their children with the best interests of their children at the heart of it. Clare is a compassionate and creative thinker who encourages her clients to engage in new innovative ideas and concepts, embracing compromise with a real emphasis on future focus.

Clare is a trained mediator allowing her to undertake mediation in all types of family proceedings. She fully believes in the value of the mediation process within family litigation and believes that both parties in such cases can greatly benefit from the process as an effective way of agreeing a solution to a dispute, rather than having a solution imposed upon them.

Reported cases

A,B and C (Fact Find: Allegations of Coercive and Controlling Behaviour) (Rev1) [2021] EWFC B103 (01 October 2021)

RE AA (Children) & 25 Ors [2019] EWFC 64: Clare was led by Julia Cheetham QC in this complex multi-handed public law litigation. This appears to be the largest public law family case that has been litigated. There were 15 care cases heard together by Sir Mark Hedley relating to grave sexual abuse allegations in respect of children. Sir Mark Hedley decided the principle of whether there was a power for the Family Court to stop a case at half time and if so the test for it to be exercised. Sir Mark also considered the approach to exoneration of a person who has been the subject of an allegation that could not be proved against them.

Parry v Director of Public Prosecution (2004) EWHC-3112