

JOHN THORNTON

Year called 2002

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OVERVIEW

John has extensive experience in both public and private children's cases, he is regularly instructed by solicitors for parents and children's Guardians.

Described by Legal 500 as "a strong advocate who has a no-nonsense approach", John specialises in representing parents, wider family members and intervenors in complex public law proceedings. His case load includes the particularly vulnerable, along with those facing the most serious of allegations such as physical and sexual abuse, non-accidental injury, factitious illness, and cases involving child fatality. John regularly represents parents and intervenors in multi day fact findings hearings. He has been involved in several media interest cases.

John regularly represents parents in all aspects of private law children cases including complex fact-finding hearings, alienating behaviours, relocation, domestic abuse, and intractable contact disputes. He represents children via rule 16:4 appointed Guardians. John will accept instructions through Public Access and had developed a website to assist members of public with access to justice (www.barristerfamilylaw.co.uk).

John is a qualified child Arbitrator and member of the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators.

PRACTICE AREAS

Public Law Children

Private Law Children

Finance and Private Client

EXPERIENCE

John's early years of practice at the bar were a mixture of criminal and family law. During this time he developed extensive experience of trial advocacy in the Crown Court both prosecuting and defending a wide range of offences including serious violence and sexual assault (including rape) along with offences of dishonesty.

John has practiced exclusively in family law since 2009 and has built on these strong foundations to offer a forensic analysis of complex factual scenarios whilst combining this with robust cross-examination and clear case strategy. He is regularly instructed in fact finding hearings and has been successful on several occasions in persuading the court that an expert has overreached, provided inadequate analysis or that the evidence was finely balanced and pointed away from the expert opinion.

John has worked with King's Counsel on complex matters in the High Court including representing a member of the Roma community in a four-week fact finding and subsequent rehearing which involved allegation of child trafficking, rape and the supply of illegal drugs. He has also worked with King's Counsel in representing a teenage mother where the father had murdered their child and has acted on behalf of the child in parental homicide cases.

TESTIMONIALS

"A strong advocate who has a no-nonsense approach. He is particularly strong at representing fathers accused of posing a significant risk. His blunt style is powerful and effective." **Legal 500, 2024 Ranked: Tier 6**

"Very experienced in public and private child law." **Legal 500, 2019**

"Pragmatic, Forthright and Intelligent." **Legal 500 2018**

"Thank you for your help and guidance. It's difficult to put into words what you have helped me achieve. Thank you for helping bring my family together." **Mr O, Private Client**

"I hope you don't mind me emailing you direct, I just wanted to thank you for your efforts on my court case. You were absolutely superb and delivered my case perfectly. Needless to say, I am over the moon with the result." **Mr. J DaCosta, Private Client**

"Thank you, John Thornton for helping me achieve a successful outcome at my hearing. I found you very professional and easy to talk too about my circumstances. I felt reassured and extremely impressed with the way you dealt with my case. I would not hesitate to recommend your services to anyone." **Ms. K Newing, Public Access**

“I have been very impressed with your attention to detail, pragmatic attitude and your willingness to go above and beyond what was expected of you, to ensure a successful outcome on the day. I found your direct access approach very reassuring, and I will have no hesitation in retaining your services again.”

Mr X, Public Access

“Thank you, John, for helping me achieve a very unexpected and satisfactory outcome whilst dealing with the Court Hearing this week. As someone who, out of financial necessity, was forced to litigate in person during what had become a long drawn out and contentious financial settlement dispute, I was relieved to have someone with your knowledge, skills and confidence represent me. Your direct and down to Earth approach was refreshing and reassuring, and you managed to make complex legal issues easy to understand. I will not hesitate to recommend you to anyone in need of your services.”

Mr G Lewis, Public Access

“John was professional, knowledgeable but friendly throughout my case and I can’t recommend him highly enough. His calmness in the court helped keep the case on track through a very tumultuous time for me and I couldn’t have done it without him. Thanks John!”

Mr S Harlow, Public Access.

CASES

[O v B-M \[2019\] EWFC B23 \(16 February 2019\)](#)

[KCC v A & Ors \(Progress by adults with large family over 12 months. Finely balanced departure from experts’ opinions\) \[2017\] EWFC B95](#)

[KCC v D & Ors \(5\) \(Re-hearing\) \[2015\] EWFC 96](#)

[KCC v D & Ors \(4\) \(Re W\) \[2015\] EWFC 94](#)

[KCC v D & Ors \(3\) \(Application for Re-hearing\) \[2015\] EWFC 94](#)

[KCC v D & Ors \(2\) \(Fact Finding\) \[2015\] EWFC 93](#)

[KCC v D & Ors \[2014\] EWFC 59](#)

EDUCATION AND PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

BA (hons) Law & Criminology (2:1)

Bar Vocational Course (Nottingham)

The Honourable Society of Gray’s Inn

Association of Lawyers for Children

Chartered Institute of Arbitrators

Family Law Bar Association

Liberty