

RACHEL COOPER

Year called 2017

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“Rachel is the complete package: highly intelligent with strong technical ability complemented by exceptional people skills and genuine empathy. She is always thoroughly on top of her brief, and delivers pragmatic, well-reasoned advice.”

Legal 500, 2026

“A tremendous barrister for complex private children work, Rachel is another star in the making for chambers.”

Chambers & Partners, 2026

OVERVIEW

Rachel is a specialist children and financial remedy practitioner, with specialisms in international family law and modern families. Rachel also sits as a Private FDR evaluator.

Rachel’s financial remedy practice includes applications under Part III following a foreign divorce, advice on nuptial agreements (including where there is an international element), Schedule 1 applications, and cases where conduct allegations are being considered or pursued.

Rachel’s children practice includes child abduction proceedings (both Hague and non-Hague), international relocation cases, and cases where there are allegations of domestic abuse.

Rachel’s modern families practice includes Surrogacy, HFEA 2008, sperm donor cases and alternative family structures (throuples, quads).

Rachel was awarded the prestigious Lexis Nexis Young Family Law Barrister of the Year award in 2020.

Rachel hosts the ‘We Are Family Law’ podcast and was previously the host of the Family Law Week podcast between 2019 – 2022 (see ‘Podcasts’ tab for previous episodes).

Outside of work, Rachel loves hiking, spending time with friends, saunas / cold plunges, cooking and languages.

PRACTICE AREAS

Finance and Private Client
Private Law Children
International Family Law
Modern Families
ADR

EXPERIENCE

Rachel studied BA English Language & Literature (Euro) (Hons) at Leeds University, with a focus on postcolonial literature. As a part of that, Rachel spent a year at the Université de Liège in Belgium, where she studied French.

Rachel went on to complete a MA in International Relations at King's College, London and then spent a year living and working in Central America (Belize). This included working as an intern at Glenn D Godfrey & Co LLP in Belize City.

Rachel returned to the UK to complete the GDL (Distinction) and LPC (Distinction) at BPP University of Law.

Rachel completed her training contract at Hanne & Co solicitors and qualified into their Private Family Law team on 1 May 2015.

Rachel went to the Court of Appeal as a Judicial Assistant in October 2015. Rachel worked for Lady Justice Black (as she was), Sir Andrew McFarlane P., and Lady Justice King during this year. It was following this experience that Rachel decided to move to the bar.

Rachel cross-qualified in 2017 and began her pupillage at Coram Chambers in October 2017. Rachel joined Coram Chambers as a tenant in October 2018.

NON-COURT DISPUTE RESOLUTION (NCDR)

Rachel has experience of arbitrating both children and financial remedy cases.

Rachel regularly appears in Private FDR cases.

Rachel sits as a Private FDR Evaluator.

Rachel is undertaking Mediation through Resolution in 2026 and hopes to add this to her practice later in 2027.

PUBLICATIONS

DWellbeing in family law: practical advice for avoiding burnout in lockdown. Blog published on Coram Chambers' website, Jan 2021.

Non-molestation orders: Valid Service in the time of Coronavirus (Part 2) (Family Law Week, co-authored with Michael Horton, July 2020)

'Pre-nuptial agreements: a decade since Radmacher' (co-authored with Hannah Minty,

Russell Cooke). A 2-part series published in the Resolution Review (Jan/Feb 2020 and Mar/Apr 2020)

Domestic abuse and service (Family Law Week, co-authored with Michael Horton, June 2020)

'Surrogacy: BBC Radio 4's 'The Archers' storyline highlights legal issues for parents' (Family Law Week, October 2019)

Private law update (Legal Action magazine, co-authored with Sarah Tyler, Jan 2020)

In addition to her busy practice Rachel hosts the Family Law Week podcast and her publications include:

Resolution Family Law Handbook (3rd edition, published 2020)

'Prenuptial agreements: a decade since Radmacher' co-authored with Hannah Minty, partner at Russell-Cooke solicitors

Non-molestation orders: Valid Service in the time of Coronavirus (Part 2) (Family Law Week, co-authored with Michael Horton, July 2020)

Domestic abuse and service (Family Law Week, co-authored with Michael Horton, June 2020)

'Surrogacy: BBC Radio 4's 'The Archers' storyline highlights legal issues for parents' (Family Law Week, October 2019)

EDUCATION AND PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

Eductation

BA English Language and Literature (Euro) (Hons), University of Leeds / Université de Liège, Belgium (Upper Second Class)

MA International Relations, War Studies Dept., King's College, University of London

Graduate Diploma in Law (Distinction); Legal Practice Course (Distinction); Bar Transfer Test, BPP University of Law

Professional Memberships

Honourable Society of Inner Temple

Resolution

Association of Lawyers for Children

Family Law Bar Association

Women in Family Law (WiFL)

REPORTED CASES

Financial Remedies

H v M (No 1) [2025] EWHC 2817 (Fam)

H v M (No 2) [2025] EWHC 2647 (Fam)

International Children

Re C (A Child: Transnational Abandonment: Wardship) [2026] EWHC 594

Y (The father) v Y (The Mother) [2025] EWHC 1598

Re C (A Child: Summary Return to Pakistan) [2025] EWHC 1427 (Fam)

Mr A v Ms R (Re K & S (Article 13(b))) [2023] EWHC 1883 (Fam)

D v T (Relocation to Germany) [2023] EWFC 285 (B)

Complex children cases

P, H-L (CHILDREN) (Mobile Phone Extraction) [2023] EWCA Civ 206

In the matter of T (A Child) (Appellant) [2021] UKSC 35

C (Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage: Fact Finding) [2019] EWHC 3449 (Fam)

TESTIMONIALS

“Rachel is well prepared and strong on her feet.”

Chambers and Partners, 2026

“Rachel Cooper is simply great at her job. She is empathetic, robust and very knowledgeable.”

Chambers and Partners, 2026

“Her technical knowledge and advocacy skills are excellent. She also has an empathetic and very personable manner which makes her popular with solicitors and lay clients alike.”

Chambers and Partners, 2026

“Rachel Cooper carried out incredible legal research and picked up points which hadn’t been picked up recently. Her review of the law was superb.”

Chambers and Partners, 2026

“A tremendous barrister for complex private children work, Rachel is another star in the making for chambers.”

Chambers and Partners, 2026

“Rachel is the complete package: highly intelligent with strong technical ability complemented by exceptional people skills and genuine empathy. She is always thoroughly on top of her brief, and delivers pragmatic, well-reasoned advice.”

Legal 500, 2026

“Calm, great with the client and solicitor alike, knows the law and good on her feet.”

Legal 500, 2026

“Rachel is an approachable and intellectual advocate.”

Legal 500, 2025

“She’s one of the outstanding individuals in the next generation of family barristers.”

Chambers & Partners, 2025

“Rachel Cooper does an amazing job in unusual and difficult cases.”

Chambers & Partners, 2025

“She is pragmatic and a very safe pair of hands.”

Chambers & Partners, 2025

“Rachel grasps the fine detail of each case.”

Chambers & Partners, 2025

“Rachel was amazing, very understanding, easy to speak to and made me a lot less stressed about the day as soon as I met her. Can’t thank Rachel or yourself enough with regards to today - I’m over the moon! Thanks again!”

Lay client, via Slater & Gordon solicitors

“I instructed Rachel Cooper on a matrimonial finance matter as she was recommended to me by a colleague. Rachel has a fantastic manner in addition to the delivery of very sound, responsive, and user-friendly advice. I was able to bring my issues to a fairly swift conclusion and my only regret is that I did not instruct her much earlier. I would not hesitate to recommend her in the future.”

Direct Access client

“I would like to thank Rachel for her assistance direction and time with the case involving my daughter. It has been a really testing and nerve challenging time for the past few years and yesterday finally felt like a line was drawn under the matter, largely thanks to Rachel. Her help on my case was greatly appreciated. I hope that she will continue to rescue many lost fathers and mothers that find themselves in difficult custody situations.”

Lay Client, via Makwanas Solicitors

PODCASTS

We Are Family Law podcast with Simone McGrath of Osbornes Law

21 August 2025

Rachel and Simone discuss Simone's journey into family law, her formative experiences working on domestic violence cases, her care work, and her specialisation in international children law. Simone reflects on a childhood spent partially in Guyana, her cultural identity, and the challenges of being a black person in Britain and in the legal profession. The conversation touches on the importance of representation in law, the evolving landscape of family law, and the need for honest communication between solicitors and counsel.

We Are Family Law podcast with Andrew Powell KC of 4PB Chambers

6 August 2025

Rachel and Andrew discuss Andrew's journey into family law, his experiences with imposter syndrome, the cultural influences of his upbringing, and the importance of representation in the legal profession. The conversation also delves into the complexities of modern family structures, legal challenges in surrogacy, and notable case studies that highlight the evolving nature of family law.

Family Law Week podcast with Diana Hamade

11 April 2022

Diana Hamade is an international renowned lawyer based in the UAE. Diana discussed her life, her career so far and family law.

Family Law Week podcast with The Mediation Space

4 April 2022

Rachel is joined by Susan Baldock and Jacqueline Marks of The Mediation Space to discuss their new dispute resolution offering in family law, as well as discussing their lives and careers.

Family Law Week podcast with Ayesha Vardag

22 February 2022

Founder of Vardags Solicitors. Ayesha discuss her life, career, and 3 of what Ayesha considers to be her most important cases.

Family Law Week podcast with Alexis Campbell KC of 29 Bedford Row Chambers

21 December 2021

Alexis discusses her life and career, the cases of *JL v SL* [2015] EWHC 360 v *Villiers v Villiers* [2020] UKSC 30. Rachel and Alexis also discussed transparency and the family court, family arbitration and wellbeing.

Family Law Week podcast with Karin Walker of KGW Family Law and Dr Supriya McKenna

14 December 2021

Discussing the book: 'Narcissism and Family law: A Practitioners Guide' and how to approach a case where there is a narcissist involved.

Family Law Week podcast with Marilyn Stowe, Founder of Stowe Family Law Solicitors

9 November 2021

Rachel and Marilyn discuss Marilyn's career, including founding, running and ultimately selling a national law firm, her professional work, wellbeing and the Nuffield Foundation's report "Children's experience of private law proceedings: 6 key messages from the research" published on 21 October 2021.

Family Law Week podcast with Dr S Chelvan, Head of Immigration and Public Law at 33 Bedford Row

8 August 2021

Dr Chelvan is a globally recognised legal expert on refugee and human rights claims based on sexual or gender identity and expression. Dr Chelvan has practised in the field of LGBT+ asylum since 2001 and has earned a reputation for being the leading legal expert in the UK, spearheading some of the leading cases since 2005 as well as providing consultation to the United Nations, the IOM, national governmental departments, lawyers, and NGOs. For surrogacy week Dr Chelvan joins Rachel to discuss the case of H v UK (Application No: 32185/20). This is a case about a child's Article 8 ECHR right to have her biological father named as her father on her birth certificate rather than the husband of her surrogate mother (per ss. 35 & 38 HEFA 2008). The matter came before the domestic Courts was heard before Lieven J in July 2019 ([2019] EWHC 2095 (Admin)).

Family Law Week podcast: Surrogacy special with Andrew Powell of 4PB chambers and Natalie Sutherland of Burgess Mee solicitors

27 June 2021

This episode provides an introduction to surrogacy law in England and Wales and a run through some of the more recent interesting surrogacy cases that have come before the family court. Andrew and Natalie also discuss their different journeys into family law, Natalie's social media profile as @modernfamilylawyer and Andrew's perspectives on race, diversity and inclusion in the law and at the bar and what more can be done to ensure that we are all being better allies to black lawyers and other minorities within the legal profession.

Family Law Week podcast with Elizabeth (Liz) Isaacs KC of St Ives Chambers

1 June 2021

Rachel and Liz discuss Liz's journey into family law, her career at the bar, her fertility story and modern parentage issues, mental health with a focus on eating disorders, and working in family law during the Covid-19 lockdown. Rachel and Elizabeth discuss the case of Re C (Children)(Covid-19: Representation) [2020] EWCA Civ 734 and what hybrid practices might look like for family lawyers and their clients going forward. Please note, TW(trigger warning): This podcast contains sensitive material, covering mental health and eating disorders.

Family Law Week podcast with Edward Devereaux KC of Harcourt Chambers

6 April 2021

Rachel and Edward discuss his life and career and then enjoy an in-depth discussion about the recent Supreme Court decision of G v G [2021] UKSC 9. G v G case considered the interrelationship between the law relating to child abduction and the law relating to asylum and immigration. It specifically considered how cases should be dealt with where there are two different sets of proceedings: the 1980 Hague Convention proceedings being determined in the Family Division of the High Court; and the asylum application that is being determined by the Secretary of State for the Home Department.

Family Law Week podcast with Rachael Kelsey of SKO Solicitors and former Chair of the IAFL
25 March 2021

Rachael and Rachel discuss some of the most interesting cases of Rachael's career, including *Fourman v Fourman* (1998) FamLR 98, *Willson v Willson* [2008] ScotCS CSOH 161 and the case of *Villiers v Villiers*. They also discuss Rachael's career generally and the various different strands of law and practice that have (and continue to) spark her interest.

Family Law Week podcast with James Stewart of Pennington Manches Cooper LLP
5 March 2021

Rachel discuss some of the most interesting cases of James' career, including *Clibbery v Allen* [2002] EWCA Civ 45, *Re AI and MT* [2013] EWHC 100 (Fam) and *AG v VD* [2021] EWFC 9. They also discuss his life and his career as a family lawyer more generally.

Family Law Week podcast with Natasha Shotunde of Garden Court Chambers
24 January 2021

Rachel and Natasha discuss Imposter Syndrome, the Family Court's approach to domestic abuse and special measures for remote hearings.

Family Law Week podcast with Sir Paul Coleridge
16 November 2020

With Sir Paul Coleridge discussing his career at the bar, on the bench and his work with the Marriage Foundation.

Family Law Week podcast with Andrew Bagchi KC of 1GC
9 November 2020

Andrew and Rachel discuss what it means to have confidence as a family lawyer. They also discuss the Court of Protection with specific reference to *LB Tower Hamlets v NB v AU* [2019] EWCOP 17 and *A Local Authority v JB* [2020] EWCA Civ 735, and the issue of how the Court of Protection should approach capacity to consent to sexual relations.

Family Law Week podcast with Ruth Henke KC of 30 Park Place chambers
4 October 2020

Ruth and Rachel discuss devolution/Wales and the cases of *Re C (Children) (Care: Change of Forename)* [2016] EWCA Civ 374 and *T-S (A Child)* [2019] EWCA Civ 742.

Family Law Week podcast with Martha Cover
30 September 2020

With Martha Cover of Coram Chambers for an Alienating Behaviours special.

Family Law Week podcast with Carolina Marín Pedreño and Sulema Jahangir of Dawson Cornwell solicitors for an International Children Law special
21 September 2020

They look at a range of international family law issues but specifically, two Hague Convention cases: (1) *The Rachael Neustadt case*; and (2) *LC (Children)(No 2)* [2014] UKSC 1. They also look at the issue of stranded spouses or Transnational spouse abandonment and Forced Marriage, with reference to *Re K (Forced Marriage: Passport Order)* [2020] EWCA Civ 190.

Family Law Week podcast with Barbara Mills KC of 4PB Chambers

9 August 2020

Discussing diversity, mediation and family law.

Family Law Week podcast with Alex Laing of Coram Chambers

26 July 2020

They discuss Deprivation of Liberty safeguards and the interrelationship between the inherent jurisdiction and s.25 CA 1989 / s.119 Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014. They also discuss Villiers v Villiers [2020] UKSC 30.

Family Law Week podcast: Costs Special with Nicholas Allen KC, Charlotte Trace and Emily Page of 29 Bedford Row

16 July 2020

They discuss where we have come from on costs, where we are now and where we are going. Cases considered in depth: WG v HG [2018] EWFC 84, MB v EB (No 2) [2019] EWHC 3676 and RM v TM [2020] EWFC 41 New cost rules looked at in detail: FPR 2010, r.9.27 and FPR 2010, r.9.27A.

Family Law Week podcast with Charles Howard KC of 1KBW

28 June 2020

Rachel and Charles discuss Imerman v Imerman [2010] 2 FLR 814 and issues of non-disclosure by parties in financial proceedings, and the decision of Williams J in DN v UD [2020] EWHC 627 (Fam) on Schedule 1, the significance of that decision and Sch 1 CA 1989 claims generally.

Family Law Week podcast with Jenny Beck KC (Hon), Director of Beck Fitzgerald solicitors

21 June 2020

Family Law Week podcast with Lucy Maxwell of 1GC

22 March 2020

Lucy and Rachel discuss the complications of the Covid-19 Coronavirus and the opportunity to move forward with paperless working.

Family Law Week podcast with Dr Rob George KC of Harcourt Chambers

15 March 2020

Rob and Rachel discuss his work and experience and look in-depth at the use of the Inherent Jurisdiction of the High Court in family proceedings. In particular, they discuss use of the inherent jurisdiction in recent applications for the return of children alleged to have been wrongfully removed from another jurisdiction: NY (A Child) [2019] UKSC 49 and Re F (Abduction: Sexual Abuse: Summary Return) [2019] EWHC 3791. They also discuss use of the inherent jurisdiction where a local authority applies for a declaration that they can vaccinate a looked-after child with reference to the recent decision in Re T (A child) [2020] EWHC 220 (Fam) and in private law proceedings relating to the funeral arrangements for a deceased child with reference to the recent decision in Re E [2019] EWHC 3639.

Family Law Week podcast with Suzanne Kingston

(The Queen of Family Arbitration, now of Pennington Manches Cooper LLP, then of Mills & Reeve)
12 March 2020

Suzanne and Rachel discuss her 30 years of experience as a family solicitor and partner at Withers, family arbitration, pre-nuptial agreements, Moor J's recent case concerning compensation and making compensation claims in financial proceedings, conduct and costs in family proceedings following the decision in MB v EB [2019] EWHC 3676 and her involvement with Women in Family (WiFL).

Family Law Week podcast with Nkumbe Ekaney KC of 1GC

23 February 2020

Discussing diversity at the bar and in the legal profession generally, the use of s.43 CA orders in radicalisation cases, FGM cases and the relationship between findings in the criminal and family courts.

Family Law Week podcast with The Divorce Surgery

(Harry Gates and Samantha Woodham of 4PB Chambers)

17 February 2020

Discussing Family Law reform, financial remedies, the Child Arrangements Programme, mediation and more. Cases discussed: JK v MK [2020] EWFC 2.

Family Law Week podcast with Laura Naser of Pennington Manches Cooper LLP

10 February 2020

Discussing her book, 'The Family Lawyer's Guide to Separation and Divorce: How to Get What You Both Want', together with recent cases: HR v DS [2019] EWHC 2425 and AB v CD [2019] EWHC 3381.

Family Law Week podcast with Nigel Dyer KC of 1 Hare Court Chambers

27 January 2020

Cases discussed: Agbaje v Akinnoye-Agbaje [2010] UKSC 13, CB v KB [2019] EWFC 78 and XW v XH [2019] EWCA Civ 549.

Family Law Week podcast with Zoe Bloom (Founder of AFP Bloom, then at Keystone Law)

19 January 2020

Cases discussed: TT v CDS [2019] EWHC 3572 (Fam) and Neil v Neil [2019] EWHC 3330 (Fam).

Family Law Week podcast with Mark Twomey KC of Coram Chambers

31 December 2019

Cases discussed: Re A (A child) [2018] EWCA civ 2240 and In the matter of NY (A child) [2019] UKSC49.

Family Law Week podcast with Eleri Jones of 1GC to discuss international law

9 December 2019

Cases discussed: C v C [2019] UKPC 40 and Re I-L (Children) (1996 Hague Child Protection Convention: Inherent Jurisdiction) [2019] EWCA Civ 1956.

Family Law Week podcast with Anarkali Musgrave of Coram Chambers

3 December 2019

Discussing alienating behaviour in the context of private law children proceedings.

Family Law Week podcast with Hannah Markham KC of 36 Family

25 November 2019

Cases discussed: Cases discussed are: Re X (FGMPO No. 2) [2019 EWHC 1990 (Fam) and In the matter of TT and YY [2019] EWHC 2384 (Fam).

Family Law Week podcast with Cyrus Lazarideh KC of 4pb Chambers

17 November 2019

Cases discussed: AA & 25 Ors (Children) (Rev 2) [2019] EWFC 64 and Re S (A Child: Adequacy of Reasoning) [2019] EWCA Civ 1845.