

1GC | Family Law

Patrick Paisley

Year of Call: 2013



Practice Overview

Patrick is a specialist in the law as it relates to children, with the primary focus on public law children. He has a busy practice and regularly represents local authorities, parents and children, whether separately represented or through their guardian. He has appeared in the High Court both with and without a leader.

Children (Public Law)

Patrick has particular expertise in public law cases, involving care proceedings under the Children Act 1989 and adoption proceedings under the Adoption and Children Act 2002. He is regularly instructed to represent local authorities, parents, children, and interveners in care proceedings, from the first hearing to contested interim hearings, fact-finding hearings and final hearings.

He has experience of cases involving:

- Death of a child or parent;
- Serious non-accidental injury to children (including multiple fractures and intracranial injuries);
- Fabricated or induced illness (FII);
- Sexual abuse;
- Forced marriage;
- Terrorism and wardship;
- Chronic neglect;
- Domestic abuse;
- Deprivation of liberty and the inherent jurisdiction;
- International child abduction;
- Cross-jurisdictional placement; and
- Contested applications for placement and adoption orders.

Patrick has been led by King's Counsel and senior junior counsel in complex and lengthy care cases. He also undertakes such cases as a single junior and has appeared against leading counsel.

Notable cases include:

Re A (Adoption – notice requirements) [2025] EWFC 99 (B)

Kent County Council v A & Ors [2024] EWFC 412 (B)

West Sussex County Council v MM & Ors [2023] EWFC 38

Re 5 Children (Induced and Exaggerated Illnesses Pattern of Behaviour) [2021] EWHC 3750

Derby City Council v BA & Ors [2021] EWHC 2931 (Fam)

G, Re [2020] EWFC 94 (22 December 2020)

Children (Private Law)

Patrick has experience of private law matters, including child arrangements, prohibited steps and specific issue orders, and applications under the inherent jurisdiction.

He acts in cases where there is often a complicating feature such as fact-finding, joinder of a child as a party to proceedings or an international issue.

Patrick has represented parents, wider family members, children and rule 16.4 Guardians.

His cases have involved: internal and external relocation applications; psychiatric and psychological expert evidence; children giving evidence; summary return applications from Hague and non-Hague convention countries; fact-findings involving physical, sexual and emotional abuse, coercive & controlling behaviour; applications for wardship; applications under the inherent jurisdiction; transfer of residence; name-change cases; shared-care cases; special guardianship orders; family assistance orders; intractable contact & alienation cases and applications for Tipstaff Orders.

Notable cases include:

MG v JH [2018] EWHC 3477

J (A Child : 1980 Hague Convention proceedings) [2021] EWHC 1213 (Fam) (10 May 2021)

Notable Cases

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What the Directories Say

"Patrick can handle any challenge with a considered and steady hand. He knows the papers inside out, and his analysis of the issues is top-notch." Tier 6 - Legal 500, 2025

"Patrick is an excellent advocate. He is meticulous in his preparation and has an eye for detail. His documents are thorough, precise and persuasive. He can distil and present extensive and complex information clearly and logically." Legal 500, 2024

Education

BPTC, Very Competent (BPP)
GDL, Commendation (BPP)
MA Ethics, Merit (King's College London)
BA (Hons) English Literature (Newcastle University)
Harmsworth Scholar, Middle Temple

Memberships & Associations

Honourable Society of the Middle Temple
Association of Lawyers for Children
Family Law Bar Association
Advocate

Seminars, Publications and Training

Patrick has written articles, case summaries and practice notes for the Family Rights Group, Family Law Week, and the Family Law Journal. He has been instructed to prepare written opinions, seminars and training to solicitors and local authorities on a variety of children law issues.

He gave a webinar on "Enforcement in Children Proceedings" (June 2020) and on "Interim Care Hearings - Tips for Juniors" (March 2021) as part of the 1GC Family Law Webinar series.