Elizabeth Isaacs KC*

Year of Silk: **2013** | Year of Call: **1998**

ST JOHN STREET CHAMBERS
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Overview

Elizabeth is a specialist child law silk and sits as a Family Division Deputy High Court Judge. She has an established national reputation for a compassionate, pragmatic and strategic approach, excellent advocacy and forensic preparation in complex public law cases. Elizabeth has substantial expertise in acting for all parties in complex care, adoption and wardship proceedings and has a detailed knowledge of the legal and social care issues relating to local authority planning and decision making for children.

Private Law Children

Elizabeth is highly regarded for her personable and compassionate style with clients, and works collaboratively with solicitors and junior counsel in tactically planning cases as a team from the very outset of her involvement.

Particular areas of interest include:

- LGBT and Modern Families parenting issues
- Surrogacy and fertility law
- Parental order applications
- Parental alienation and emotionally conflicted children
- Disputes about habitual residence
- Domestic and international relocation
- Disputes about education, religion and medical issues
- Elizabeth is an expert authority in the development of the law relating to surrogacy; she was leading counsel in the recent groundbreaking cases of Re X (A Child) (Surrogacy: Time Limit) [2014] EWHC 3135 (Fam) and Re Z (No 2) (A Child) [2016] EWHC 1191 (Fam) (which led to the Government's revision of the law prohibiting single people from applying for parental orders).

Elizabeth is also regularly instructed in cases following breakdown of surrogacy arrangements or same-sex parenting arrangements.

In 2017 Elizabeth was shortlisted for 'Family Silk of the Year' at the Jordans Family Law Awards, in 2018 she was the 'Regional/Scottish Silk of the year' at the Legal 500 UK Awards, and in 2019 she was shortlisted again for the same award.

Elizabeth is Direct Access trained and is therefore happy and able to accept instructions from prospective clients directly.

Public Law Children

Elizabeth has substantial expertise in acting for all parties in complex care, adoption and wardship proceedings and has a detailed knowledge of the legal and social care issues relating to local authority planning and decision making for children. She recently acted for respondents in Operation Satchel and Operation Directed, the two largest public law cases heard to date in the UK Family Court.

Particular areas of interest include:

- Child death
- Serious physical injury
- Allegations of physical, emotional and sexual abuse
- Fabricated/Induced Illness (FII)
- Toxicology and poisoning
- Judicial review
- Human rights issues
- Disclosure and Public Interest Immunity (PII) issues relating to children
- LGBT and Modern Families parenting issues

Dispute Resolution

- Elizabeth is a qualified Children's Arbitrator registered with the Institute of Family Law Arbitrators. She has a national reputation for a strategic and collaborative approach, excellent advocacy, forensic preparation and is highly regarded for her compassionate style with clients. She is a contributing editor to the Family Court Practice. In 2019 she was awarded an Honorary Doctorate from Coventry University in recognition of her contribution to family law and equality law. She is an expert authority in all aspects of private child law disputes, with particular interests in LGBT parenting issues, parental alienation, habitual residence, relocation, disputes about education, religion and medical issues, and surrogacy and fertility law. She is frequently instructed in cases following breakdown of surrogacy arrangements or same-sex parenting arrangements.

Elizabeth is a member of the Family Law Bar Association, LGBT Family Law Institute UK & Ireland, Member of Chartered Institute of Arbitrators, and is a trustee of the Donor Conception Network.

She is able to conduct arbitration hearings in person in chambers in Birmingham, London, Liverpool or Manchester, or is very happy to travel to any venue as requested. She is also able to conduct hearings remotely, by telephone or video-link, if required.

Arbitration

Elizabeth prioritises a collaborative approach with solicitors and clients, providing clear leadership within the team to deliver the best outcomes in the case. Elizabeth regularly acts for parents, interveners, children and the Official Solicitor. Particular areas of expertise and interest include –

- LGBTQ and Modern Families parenting issues
- Children's living and contact arrangements
- Intractable welfare disputes
- Disputes about habitual residence

- Domestic and international relocation
- Disputes about education, religion and medical issues
- Surrogacy and parental order applications
- Special guardianship
- Media/privacy law in family proceedings

- **VIEW PRIVACY POLICY**

Education

BA (Hons) Psychology (Dunelm)
MA Social Work
LLB (Hons)

Professional Memberships

Head of St Ives Chambers 2021
Honorary Doctorate of Laws Coventry University 2019
Bencher of Lincoln's Inn 2019
Deputy High Court Judge (Family Division) 2016
Public and Private Family Law Recorder (SE Circuit) 2012
Crown Court Recorder (SE Circuit) 2009
Silk Member of the Family Justice Council (2014 - 2019)

Notable Cases

Re Z (A Child) [2015] EWFC 73

Re F (A CHILD) (International Relocation Cases) sub nom DF v N B-F [2015] EWCA Civ 882

Re X (A Child) (Surrogacy: Time Limit) [2014] EWHC 3135 (Fam)

Re B (A Child) [2014] EWHC B1 (Fam)

Re S (A Child) [2013] EWCA Civ 1073

SMBC v RG et al [2013] EWHC 2373 (COP)

Re M (A Child) [2012] EWCA Civ 446

S v Z [2012] EWHC 84 (Fam)

Re D O'H (Children) [2011] EWCA Civ 1343

Re L (Duty to the Court of a Psychologist) [2011] EWHC B29 (Fam)

Re C and D (Photographs of Injuries) [2010] EWHC B27(Fam)

Re X, Y and Z (Children) [2010] EWHC B12 (Fam)

Re W (Care: Threshold Criteria) [2007] 2 FLR 98 (CA)

Re B (Appeals: Lack of Reasons) [2003] 2 FLR 1035 (CA)





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