

Clare Ciborowska

Call: 2009



Clare Ciborowska is a specialist family practitioner. Clare accepts instructions in private law children applications, care proceedings, Female Genital Mutilation proceedings, Injunctions and Wardship proceedings.

Clare has completed the specialist advocacy training at Keble College, Oxford and is a skilled advocate. Clare has a broad range of experience and has acted in cases concerning the following:

- Fabricated and Induced Illness
- Cases involving international/cultural issues
- Coercive and controlling behaviour and domestic abuse
- Cases involving parties and/or children with Autistic Spectrum Disorder and other developmental disorders
- Cases involving complex issues related to mental health
- Parental Alienation
- Cases where all contact has broken down
- Cases where a 16.4 Guardian has been appointed
- Internal and external relocation cases
- Specific issues orders and prohibited steps orders

Clare takes a collaborative approach to cases and is an experienced negotiator and has exceptional problem-solving skills. Clare is also a robust advocate and her written work is highly effective.

Listen to Clare discuss cutting edge family law issues in our Family Law Podcast Series on your favourite podcast platform and find previous episodes [here](#).

Hear Clare's comments on reproductive coercion on BBC Radio 4's 'File on 4' [here](#) and watch Clare in the ground-breaking BBC documentary 'Is this Coercive Control?' [here](#).

Clare is a regular contributor to Family Law Journal – her previous articles can be found [here](#) and also

contributes to the Human Rights Blog [here](#).

'Clare is an extremely diligent and hardworking advocate who will go over and above. Her strengths are her detailed preparation and understanding of a client's case and their particular needs.'

Legal 500 2024

"Clare is an incredibly committed advocate. She advocates fiercely for her client, is very hard-working and approachable."

Chambers & Partners 2024

"Clare is a driven and determined barrister."

Legal 500 2023

Children (Public Law)

Public law

Clare has extensive experience representing parties to care proceedings. Clare acts for parents, Guardians, separately represented children, local authorities and interveners and has been involved in complex fact-finding/final hearings with multiple witnesses concerning the most serious of issues, such as sexual abuse, violent offenders, non-accidental injuries, neglect and substance misuse.

Clare is highly experienced in urgent ICO hearings and works extremely well under pressure. She has an approachable and relatable manner with clients and works extremely hard on behalf of clients to achieve results.

Selected Cases

- **A Local Authority v parents** – Clare was instructed as junior counsel led by [Jacqueline Roach](#) in a complex 21 day fact-finding hearing concerning allegations of Fabricated and Induced Illness which involved analysis and management of several thousand medical records.
- **A Local Authority v M, F & ZS** – Clare was instructed as junior counsel (led by [Jacqueline Roach](#) (add link) for the latter part of the proceedings) to represent a child involving highly complex allegations of domestic abuse and parental alienation where several directions were made under S.37 to the local authority when the case was in private law proceedings and the child represented via a r16.4 Guardian. The proceedings also involved wardship and matters concerning international child abduction as well as complex arguments on separate representation of children and Gillick competence. A number of expert assessments were commissioned during the proceedings and findings were made that the mother had alienated the child from the father.

- **A Local Authority v respondents** – Clare acted *Pro Bono* on behalf of two parents accused of Female Genital Mutilation of three young girls. Clare successfully argued a number of points of law, procedure rules of evidence and the application was ultimately withdrawn by the Local Authority.
- **A Local Authority v parents** – Clare acted on behalf of a mother concerning allegations of non-accidental injury to a 3-month old baby. Both the mother and the father were initially in the pool of perpetrators and the case involved a number of expert medical witnesses.
- **A Local Authority v parents** – Clare acted on behalf of a grandmother who had been joined to care proceedings and successfully argued for the child to be placed in the grandmother's care in opposition to the parents who had significant and overwhelming mental health difficulties.
- **A Local Authority v Parents** – Clare acted for a mother with a diagnosis of Autistic Spectrum Condition and was successful in arguing for a number of special measures to be put in place and for an intermediary assessment so that the mother was able to fully participate in the hearing and give evidence against the father whilst taking account of her ASC and how it affected her ability to communicate.
- **Local Authority v P & G** Fact-finding hearing into suspected NAI with child sustaining ALTE injury, bruising and suspected strangulation marks.
- **Local Authority v G** Application during care proceedings for permission not to give father notice of the proceedings due to risk of violence towards mother and child.
- **Local Authority v D** Fact-Finding hearing into suspected NAI. Child sustaining injuries to the face. Issue as to causation.

Children (Private Law)

Clare has a strong private law children practice and is regularly instructed to provide advice and representation to clients in private law proceedings. Clare works hard to build rapport with clients and provides practical and sensitive advice. She often 'goes the extra mile'.

Clare has a wealth of experience in cases where same-sex relationships have broken down and in cases where there are questions about the legal status of same sex parents.

Clare is also experienced in cases concerning coercive and controlling behaviour and domestic abuse and has acted for parents alleging such abuse and for parents denying such allegations.

Clare is regularly instructed in cases concerning internal and external relocations and where there are international or cultural matters involved.

Selected Cases

- **A v B** – private law relocation case. Clare successfully represented a mother in an international relocation application whereby the mother was granted permission to relocate with the child to The Netherlands
- **A v B** – Clare represented the mother in a same-sex relationship where all communication had broken down and where there was an intractable dispute over where the child should live and how the child should spend time with the other parent.
- **A Child** – Clare represented mother in private law proceedings in a case concerning significant coercive and controlling behaviour and was successful in arguing that there should be no order for contact between the five children and the father after obtaining findings against the father of the most serious nature.
- **A Child** – Clare represented a child with British Pakistani and Icelandic heritage where the mother was applying to return to Iceland with the child and where there were also significant risk factors in respect of both parents' backgrounds.
- **A v B** – Clare represented a father in private law proceedings and was successful in arguing for a shared care arrangement in circumstances where the mother was opposed to shared care and sought for the father to spend alternate weekends only with the father.
- **L v L** Clare Successfully defended a father against allegations of sexual abuse. Findings made that the allegations had been fabricated by the Mother in order to frustrate contact.

Domestic Violence & Injunctions

Clare represents clients in injunctive proceedings including where allegations of serious domestic violence or abuse have been made. She has gained much experience of such applications, particularly where those applications are linked to concurrent Children Act 1989 proceedings.

Listen to Clare discuss coercive and controlling behaviour as applied in the family courts in episode 43 of our podcast Law Pod UK [here](#).

Direct Access

Clare accepts work from lay clients via [Direct Access](#). You can view her profile [here](#).

Appointments

- Associate, School of Social Work and Social Care, University of Sussex.

Awards

- Inner Temple Exhibition Scholarship for CPE (2007-2008)
- Inner Temple Exhibition Scholarship for BVC (2008-2009)
- Winner of the University of Sussex Mooting Competition (2008)

Education

- Keble College, Advanced Advocacy Training (2015)
- College of Law, London, BVC (Very Competent), (2009)
- University of Sussex, CPE (Merit), (2008)
- University of Sussex, BA (Hons) Contemporary History (First Class), (2004)

Memberships

- FLBA
- Bar Pro Bono Unit

Publications

- Law Pod UK [Family Law Podcast Series](#)
- *Whether current drive to limit court time for hearings is realistic or appropriate?*; [Family Law Journal](#) [2021]

- *Dignity, Fairness, Equality, Respect and Independence*; Family Law [2019]
- *How to approach allegations of coercive and controlling behaviour in private law proceedings*; Family Law [2019] Fam Law 541
- Contributor to the UK Human Rights Blog