

Alex Forbes

Call: 2003



Alex has extensive experience of all aspects of family law, both children and financial. His practice is predominantly in the field of public law children work. He has experience in all tiers of court up to the Court of Appeal (where he has appeared on multiple occasions), representing all types of party.

Alex is often instructed in cases involving complex medical evidence or unusual matters of law and procedure. He is the first port of call for many solicitors where they have a finely balanced case and the outcome can turn on the smallest of details.

Alex provides all of his clients with honest and practical advice in a sensitive manner. He is adept at managing the situation both inside and outside the court room and takes seriously his obligation to, “promote and protect fearlessly and by all proper and lawful means the lay client’s best interests.”

Alex has a particular interest in the application of Human Rights Act remedies (injunctions, declaratory relief and damages) both within care proceedings and ancillary to them; he has on more than one occasion obtained damages and other relief in circumstances where a parent’s Human Rights have been found to have been breached.

Public Law Children

Successful outcomes require mastery over both the facts of a case and the legal principles to be applied. The following cases demonstrate Alex’s abilities in both domains:

Notable Public Law Children cases

London

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Oxford

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- **Reading Borough Council v Mother & Ors [2025] EWFC 57 (B)**
Care proceedings issued following concerns over mother's mental health, physical harm to children and neglect.
- **R & C (Adoption or Fostering) [2024] EWCA Civ 1302**
Appeal by local authority against refusal to make placement orders in respect of two young children.
- **A Council v Mother of CA & Ors [2023] EWFC 274**
A fact finding hearing in which a young teenager made allegations of physical and sexual abuse by her father and step mother which were found proved.
- **Re E and H (Care Proceedings – Alleged FII – Costs) [2023] EWFC 69**
Care proceedings, issued following concerns that mother had fabricated or induced illness in the children. No such findings made. Application for costs by parents.
- **Re H (A Child: s. 38(6) Assessment) [2023] EWHC 1083 (Fam)**
Care proceedings. Application by mother for direction that child join parents in residential placement, for the family to be assessed.
- **Re W-A (Children) [2022] EWCA Civ 1118, [2022] 3 WLR 1235**
An appeal against a decision that foreign convictions were admissible in evidence and carried presumptive weight that the offence had been committed in fact-finding in children's cases.
- **Oxfordshire County Council v A Mother & Ors [2022] EWFC 141 (9 November 2022)**
Care proceedings concerning placement of 15 year old, & whether it should be secured by a care order, or whether he should be accommodated under s.20 CA.
- **In the matter of X (Adopted Child: Access to Court File) [2014] EWFC 33**
Alex appeared as advocate to the court (instructed by the Official Solicitor). The case identified the appropriate criteria to be applied where a descendant of an adopted person seeks information from the court file about an ancestor's birth family.
- **M (A Child: Long Term Foster Care) [2014] EWCA Civ 1406**
Alex was led in the Court of Appeal in a case that clarified the guidance given in Re B-S and Re B, and emphasised that in a public law context what has to be determined is not simply whether any other course is possible but whether there is another course which is possible and in the child's interests.
- In an unreported case Alex was led by John Vater QC on behalf of a father who had been accused of perpetrating multiple injuries to his young son, including multiple rib fractures, subdural bleeding and petechial bruising consistent with strangulation. The medical evidence was complicated by the existence of "BESS", a condition that predisposes young children to subdural bleeding at reduced force. By the conclusion of the expert evidence the Local Authority sought permission to withdraw its application and the child was returned to parental care.
- Earlier this year Alex, again led by John Vater QC, acted on behalf of a father in a case where a young baby had been killed by a shaking mechanism. Alex's client had been included in the pool of potential perpetrators. At the

conclusion of the case the High Court judge fully exonerated the parents, found that threshold had not been crossed, and the children were returned to parental care.

Direct Access

Alex is qualified to accept instructions directly from members of the public under the Direct Access Scheme in appropriate circumstances.

Publications

- Secure Accommodation for Troublesome Teenagers; Journal of Social Welfare and Family Law, 4th January 2017
- Adoption Search: Re X October [2014] Fam Law 1373

Memberships

- Lincoln's Inn
- Family Law Bar Association

Education

- BVC, BPP Law School
- Law Conversion, BPP Law School
- Philosophy, London School of Economics

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