



## Edward Bennett

Call: 2013

Edward's practice focuses on international disputes concerning children or vulnerable adults.

Edward is one of the editors of the leading practitioner work Clarke Hall & Morrison on Children. He sits on the editorial board of the International Family Law Journal and was its General Editor from 2015 – 2020. He is a member of the Legal Working Group of the leading child abduction charity Reunite and of the Head of International Family Justice's International Family Law Committee. In 2015, he was named Young Family Law Barrister of the Year at the Jordans (now Lexis Nexis) Family Law Awards. In 2023, he was shortlisted for International Family Lawyer of the Year at those same awards.

Edward previously trained as a solicitor in the London and Prague offices of Allen & Overy LLP. On qualification, he spent a year as the Judicial Assistant to the Rt. Hon. Lord Justice Lloyd in the Court of Appeal and a further year as Legal Secretary to the Head of International Family Justice for England & Wales, the Rt. Hon. Lord Justice Thorpe.

Outside the bar, Edward spent two years alongside his legal practice as a Research Assistant at the College of Arms.

Edward is also the Registrar of the British Indian Ocean Territory Court of Appeal. To contact the Registry, please email [registrarbiotcourtofappeal@harcourtchambers.co.uk](mailto:registrarbiotcourtofappeal@harcourtchambers.co.uk).

## International Family Law

Edward has significant experience in cases of international children cases at first instance and appellate level.

### London

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## Notable International Family Law cases

- **S (A Child) : Refusal of Summary Return to UAE, Re [2025] EWHC 892 (Fam)**  
Application by Father for return of his son to the United Arab Emirates. Return refused, in part so that Mother's allegations of serious domestic abuse could be determined by courts here.
- **A v B [2025] EWHC 764 (Fam)**  
Father's application for summary return of child from Dubai, and mother's application for permission to remove child to Dubai.
- **K (Children) (Application for return orders: Concurrent asylum claims) [2025] EWHC 450 (Fam)**  
Case concerning two children who had come across the channel in a small boat without their parents.
- **M v A [2024] EWHC 3230 (Fam)**  
Application by father for summary return of children to Poland.
- **AJ v FJ (Appeal Against Registration) [2024] EWFC 356**  
The first successful appeal under The Hague Child Support Convention 2007.
- **DL v BJ [2024] EWHC 2160 (Fam)**  
Application by father under inherent jurisdiction for summary return of child to Dubai.
- **M v F [2024] EWHC 1689 (Fam)**  
Application by mother for summary return of child to Ukraine. Father's defences of habitual residence, acquiescence and harm not made out, and return ordered.
- **Smolik, Elena (A Child) (Re Senior Courts Act 1981) [2024] EWHC 920 (Fam)**  
Edward represented the successful Applicant mother. Return of child from Slovakia ordered.
- **R v M & Ors (Hague Convention; Withdrawal of Application and Art. 16 (Parental Responsibility) [2024] EWHC 720 (Fam)**  
Application by step-father for return of children to New Zealand. Leave given to withdraw application.
- **Re AB (a child) [2024] EWHC 586 (Fam)**  
Proceedings exploring the interplay between adoption and surrogacy law. Case concerning a child born as a result of a surrogacy arrangement in the USA. Judgment considering whether adoption order made in the USA prevents the making of a parental order.
- **Natalie Dawn Kennedy v Philip Thomas [2024] EWHC 303 (Fam)**  
International Child Abduction/Committal Proceedings.
- **K v E [2023] EWHC 2890 (Fam)**  
International Child Abduction/consent and grave risk of harm defences.

- **Z (A Child) (1980 Hague Convention), Re [2023] EWHC 2696 (Fam)**  
International Child Abduction/child's objections
- **D (A Child), Re (Abduction: Child's Objections: Representation of Child Party) [2023] EWCA Civ 1047**  
International Child Abduction/role of 'solicitor-guardians' in 1980 Hague Convention proceedings.
- **TMS v AVS [2023] EWHC 1620 (Fam)**  
International Child Abduction/Russian Federation.  
Reported in [Care Appointments](#).
- **N & A (1996 Hague Convention: Article 13) [2023] EWCA Civ 623**  
International Child Abduction/Ukraine/Lis Pendens.
- **Re B (children) (abduction: consent: oral evidence) (Article 13(b)) [2022] EWCA Civ 1171**  
Oral evidence in child abduction cases.
- **S (A Child : Costs), Re [2022] EWHC 2604 (Fam)**  
Costs/International Child Abduction.
- **Re S (A Child: Jurisdiction) [2022] EWHC 1720 (Fam); [2023] 1 FLR 290; [2022] 3 FCR 501**  
Antigua and Barbuda/International Child Abduction.
- **Re S (A Child) (1980 Hague Convention Stranding) [2022] 2 FLR 792**  
International child abduction/transnational spousal abandonment.
- **CC v ME [2021] EWHC 3506 (Fam)**  
International child abduction/calculation time period to engage the 1980 Hague Convention settlement 'defence'.
- **WX v YZ and Another [2021] 1 FLR 118**  
International child abduction.
- **Re BS (A Child) (Child Abduction) [2021] EWHC 2643 (Fam)**  
International child abduction.
- **Z v D (Art 13 Refusal of Return Order) [2021] 1 FLR 210**  
International child abduction.
- **Re S [2020] EWHC 2940 (Fam)**  
International child abduction/recognition and enforcement.
- **Re PT (Abduction: Coronavirus: Grave Risk of Harm) [2020] EWHC 834 (Fam); [2020] Fam Law 822**  
Child abduction during the Covid-19 pandemic.
- **Re S (Abduction: Dismissal of Application) [2019] 1 FLR 354**  
International child abduction.

- **AH v AMH (Summary Return of Child to Sudan) [2018] EWHC 2981 (Fam)**  
Child abduction/first reported occasion a child returned to Sudan.
- **Re GP (A Child) (Abduction: Consideration of Evidence) [2018] 4 WLR 16**  
International child abduction.
- **Re H (A Child) (International Abduction: Asylum & Welfare) [2017] 2 FLR 527**  
International child abduction.

## Private Law Children

Edward has wide-ranging experience of all private law children matters including, serious medical treatment, international child custody, relocation, forced marriage and stranded spouse cases, and international commercial surrogacy.

### Notable Private Law Children cases

- **C v D [2025] EWHC 963 (Fam)**  
Appeal by mother from orders providing for father to have supervised contact and for proceedings to be reserved to judge.
- **Re AB (A Child) [2024] EWHC 586 (Fam)**  
International surrogacy/overseas adoption.
- **KN & Anor v RN & Ors [2023] EWHC 712 (Fam)**  
Recognition of foreign adoption at common law/human rights.
- **Re (A Child : Findings of Fact) [2022] EWCA Civ 1652 (15 December 2022)**  
Fact-Finding/Transnational Spousal Abandonment.
- **CS v FB [2020] COPLR 76**  
Interim capacity declarations.
- **V v M (Child Arrangements Order: International Relocation) [2020] 2 FLR 387**  
International relocation.
- **Re HK (Serious Medical Treatment) (No 3) [2018] 1 FLR 125**  
Withdrawal of life-sustaining treatment. Whether there should be police presence at the bedside when withdrawal of treatment is carried out.

- **MS v PS C - 283/16**  
Court of Justice of the European Union – international child maintenance.
- **P v P [Case No 1 of 2016]**  
International relocation – the first international children’s case ever before the courts of the Sovereign Base Areas of Akrotiri and Dhekelia.
- **Re C & D (Children) (Parental Order) [2016] 2 FLR 446**  
International commercial surrogacy.
- **AA v TT (Recognition & Enforcement) [2015] 2 FLR 1 - 1980**  
European Custody Convention.

## Public Law Children

Edward has significant experience representing all parties in public law cases, in particular in relation to child protection cases with an international element, and those where questions of serious medical treatment arise.

### Notable Public Law Children cases

- **Prospective Adopters v London Borough of Ealing & Ors [2023] EWFC 294 (B)**  
Final adoption hearing following leave to oppose having been granted.
- **Re X (Care Proceedings: Jurisdiction and Fact Finding) [2021] 2 FLR 449**
- **Re T (A Child) (Association of Lawyers for Children and others intervening) [2021] UKSC 35; [2021] 3 WLR 643**  
Supreme Court appeal about the use of the inherent jurisdiction to authorise secure accommodation for vulnerable children.

## Court of Protection and Medical Treatment

Edward has significant experience in representing all parties, including Sovereign States, in Court of Protection cases and cases concerning vulnerable adults.

### Notable Court of Protection and Medical Treatment cases

#### London

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- **D (A Child: deprivation of liberty) [2015] COPLR 209**  
16/17-year-olds and deprivations of liberty.

## Civil & Other Areas Of Law

Edwards accepts instructions in ecclesiastical law.

Having spent two years at the College of Arms, Edward is one of the few juniors of the bar to have experience of contested peerage and baronetage disputes, including appearing before the Lord Lyon in his non-judicial role.

## Direct Access

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

## Appointments

- 2023: Registrar of the British Indian Ocean Territory Court of Appeal
- 2021: Fee-Paid Judge of the First-Tier Tribunal (Immigration and Asylum Chamber)
- 2021: Editor, Clarke Hall & Morrison on Children
- 2021: Legal Working Group (Reunite International Child Abduction Centre)
- 2020: Editorial Board (International Family Law Journal – General Editor from 2015 – 2020)
- 2016: Called to the bar (Sovereign Base Areas of Akrotiri and Dhekelia)
- 2013: Head of International Family Justice's International Family Law Committee
- 2011: Solicitor (England & Wales)

## Publications

- [‘Between a rock and a hard place: Mothers abroad, private law proceedings and parental responsibility’](#) – Blog March 2025
- 2023: With HHJ Moradifar, N.Hylton, S.Howard and A.Laing (eds) *‘Standard Family Orders Handbook: Volume 2 – Children and Other Orders’* (3rd Edition) (Class Legal)
- 2022: With HHJ Simmonds, A.Laing & S.Hill (co-eds), *‘A Practical Guide to Family Proceedings: Blomfield and Brooks: Seventh Edition’* (Bloomsbury)

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- With Sacha Lee, 'The 1996 Convention: What is it useful for? A guide for practitioners in navigating international Child Law cases in the post Brexit era' – International Family Law Policy and Practice (Vol 9, No 1) Summer 2021
- With E Devereux QC and R George, 'Domestic Child Abduction – Legal Responses' – Family Law Week (April 2017)
- With CM Pedreno and C Korah, 'Strike out or summary dismissal in 1980 Hague Proceedings: the guidance in Re D (Children) (Child Abduction: Practice) [2016] EWHC 504 (Fam)' April [2016] Fam Law (April 2016)
- 'Marriage, Civil Partnerships and Safeguarding the vulnerable adult', Local Government Lawyer (May 2015)
- 'Not only encouraged but essential': judicial collaboration in international family disputes' July [2013] Fam Law 845-851. Expressly approved and endorsed by Cobb J in N v K (No.2) [2014] EWHC 507 (Fam) (July 2013)
- 'Resolving family disputes in a globalised world: the role of judicial diplomacy' (Dec 12/Jan 13 issue Diplomat Magazine pp 32-33) (Jan 2013)

## Memberships

- Family Law Bar Association
- Child Abduction Lawyers Association

## Education

- 2007: BA (Hons) History, University College London

## Prizes

- 2024: Shortlisted for Family Law Junior of the Year (Legal 500 UK Bar Awards)
- 2023: Shortlisted for International Family Lawyer of the Year (Lexis Nexis Family Law Awards)
- 2015: Young Family Law Barrister of the Year (Jordan's Family Law Awards)
- 2013: Ede and Ravenscroft Prize (Inner Temple)
- 2007: MA Thomson Prize (UCL)
- 2007: Dean's List Commendation (UCL)

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