



Fazeela Ishmael

Call: 2018

Fazeela is a pragmatic and amiable advocate, practising in all core areas of family law at Harcourt, including: public and private children law, matrimonial finance, and international child abduction law. Fazeela has appeared at all levels of proceedings.

She is thorough in her preparation and gets to the heart of a case quickly. Fazeela represents clients from various backgrounds, and is particularly skilled at representing vulnerable clients.

Fazeela draws on her experiences prior to the Bar, including undertaking an LLM in the USA where she assisted the American Civil Liberties Union, and she has also worked with Citizens Advice specialising in social security benefits advice.

Fazeela is motivated to improve diversity at the Bar, and undertakes a range of events with students at all levels of education.

Public Law Children

Fazeela is regularly instructed in all forms of public law proceedings, on behalf of parents and interveners, as well as local authorities and guardians. She therefore has a holistic understanding of these proceedings, through different lenses. This informs her calm, robust approach in often difficult and complex circumstances.

Fazeela has appeared in cases involving allegations of serious non-accidental injuries to babies and infants, suspected fabricated or induced illness (FII), substance misuse, domestic violence and mental health concerns.

Notable Public Law Children cases

- **Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council v VW and others [2022] EWFC 83**

Fazeela was junior to Damian Garrido KC, representing a vulnerable mother, where the local authority pursued lengthy allegations including FII, in circumstances where care and placement orders were unopposed and significant threshold concessions had already been made. The Court determined that a 5 day fact-finding hearing

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on the unadmitted allegations was not justified, and explored the applicable factors concerning whether or not to conduct a fact-finding exercise.

Private Law Children

Fazeela represents parents, 16.4 guardians, and other family members in cases concerning all forms of parental dispute, alienation, and intractable contact.

Fazeela also undertakes injunction proceedings concerning applications for non-molestation and occupation orders. Fazeela has experience conducting multi day fact-finding and final hearings concerning serious allegations of abuse, acting for both victims and perpetrators. This informs her insight into patterns and behaviours, as well as her analysis of a case.

International Family Law

Fazeela undertakes cases at every stage of child abduction proceedings pursuant to the Hague Convention and Brussels II revised. She also has experience in applications in relation to stranded spouse cases and forced marriage protection orders.

Notable International Family Law cases

- **D (A Child), Re (Abduction: Child's Objections: Representation of Child Party) [2023] EWCA Civ 1047**
Appeal by child against return order, raising issue as to role of a "solicitor-guardian" in 1980 Convention proceedings.

Family Finance

Fazeela accepts instructions at all stages of finance proceedings. Fazeela often undertakes both the matrimonial finance and private children law proceedings for clients. This enables continuity and wrap-around support at a highly stressful time, as well as a thorough and nuanced understanding of her clients' circumstances, which informs her practical and creative advice.

Fazeela has experience in cases involving hard and soft loans v gifts, complex pension entitlement, and cases involving an international element where there are concurrent finance proceedings in other jurisdictions.

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Memberships

- Honourable Society of Gray's Inn
- Family Law Bar Association

Education

- LLB Law with American Law, University of Nottingham
- LLM US Legal Studies, Distinction, University of Connecticut
- LLM Bar Practitioners Training Course (Very Competent), Nottingham Law School

Prizes

- Dean's Professional Courses Scholarship for Academic Excellence, Nottingham Law School
- Dean's Scholarship, University of Connecticut
- Commendation Prize, highest grade in the Social Welfare Law module
- Anamax Scholarship
- Hollick Family Trust Scholarship

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