



## Margaret Styles MCLArb

Call: 2000

Margaret was called to the bar in 2000 after a civil service career in Whitehall and in recruitment consultancy for the public sector.

She accepts instructions in all aspects of children law and resolution of property issues on relationship breakdown including TOLATA applications and inheritance claims under the 1975 Act. She also appears in the Court of Protection.

Her background and experience have enabled her to assist in cases where clients are finding it hard to focus on central issues, or where distress or inability to cope with proceedings is causing especial difficulty.

Margaret trained early in her career as a mediator, and later as a collaborative lawyer. She qualified soon after the launch of the IFLA scheme as a family finance arbitrator. She uses the skills she has developed in her ADR practice to enable clients to consider all their options and to weigh up carefully how they want to proceed whether through litigation or out of court processes. She welcomes being brought in early in cases to assist and advise and to enable continuity of representation.

She regularly lectures on both children and financial issues for a wide range of audiences and is happy to contribute to larger events.

## Public Law Children

Margaret has extensive experience of representing local authorities, parents, and children's guardians in a range of public law proceedings.

### London

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### Oxford

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## Notable Public Law Children cases

- **Coventry City Council v XX & Ors [2024] EWFC 249 (B)**  
Application for care & placement orders in relation to child born in November 2023, issued following concerns about the parents' ability to care for her.
- **Warwickshire County Council v The Mother & Ors [2023] EWHC 399 (Fam)**  
Final hearing of care proceedings, in case concerning alleged parental alienation.
- **A, B, C and D (care and placement orders) [2021] EWFC B47**  
Making of care and placement orders.
- **Re T (No.2) (Care Proceedings : Fact-Finding : Genital Injuries : Supplemental judgment for publication) [2021] EWFC 101**  
Disclosure of judgement following fact finding to inform whether there should be a local child safeguarding review.
- **RE A,B,C and X (Children: NAI) 2021 EWFC B 79**  
Exoneration of parents in case of alleged non-accidental injury.
- **A local authority v RK and Others 2020 EWFC 25**  
Remote hearing – use of intermediary.  
Need for care and placement orders and contact after final orders made.
- **Fact finding for large family where children attended the hearing 2019**
- **Fact finding in case involving multi-generational abuse and modern slavery 2019**
- **Re N [2015] EWFC 40**  
Interim removal of a child in an unusual dispute over religious upbringing.

## Private Law Children

Margaret advises and represents clients in all aspects of private law proceedings, and has particular interest in cases where there are highly contested issues of fact to resolve and/or where concerns over potential alienation of children arise.

## Notable Private Law Children cases

- Alienation case where parent able to make changes to effect restoration of relationship with child after removal.
- Numerous cases for direct access clients to achieve cost effective and child focussed resolution in intractable

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disputes.

- Frequent representation of Guardian in Rule 16.4 cases.

## Family Finance

Margaret undertakes advice and representation in all areas of family centred financial disputes including where family business or settlement issues are involved. She also advises and appears in TOLATA disputes.

## Alternative Dispute Resolution

### Notable Alternative Dispute Resolution cases

- **Arbitration in case involving assets in UK and abroad**  
Definition of 'need'
- **Mediation in inheritance case leading to settlement**

## Direct Access

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

## Appointments

- Deputy District Judge (2020)

## Publications

*'Nick Goodwin KC and Margaret Styles look at the risk assessment in care proceedings'* – Blog April 2025

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## Memberships

- Family Law Bar Association
- Association of Lawyers for Children

## Education

- MA in Jurisprudence, Wadham College, Oxford

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