



Matthew Brookes-Baker

Call: 1998

Matthew is a family law specialist who is recognised as a tier 1 Leading Junior in the Legal 500. He was called to the Bar in 1998 and is a member of Lincoln's Inn.

Matthew is instructed in both public and private law cases on behalf of local authorities, parents (including prospective adoptive parents and adoption agencies), extended family members, foster carers and children.

Matthew has extensive experience in dealing with complex and difficult cases involving complex medical and factual evidence arising from allegations of non-accidental injuries, sexual abuse and FII.

Public Law Children

Matthew is instructed on behalf of parents, Local Authorities, Children's Guardians, interveners and prospective adopters. He has extensive experience in dealing with complex and difficult cases and fact finding hearings which involve:

- Infant head injury caused by shaking and other forms of serious/fatal non-accidental injury.
- Complex medical evidence and underlying conditions such as hEDS, cEDS and other genetic anomalies.
- Serious sexual abuse of both children and adults.
- Domestic violence including Murder.
- Accusations of FII.
- Mental health issues – bi-polar, psychiatric illness, personality disorders.
- Specific issue cases concerning multi-cultural families.
- Abduction and removal of children from the jurisdiction.
- Parents with significant learning disabilities.

London

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Notable Public Law Children cases

- **J, K and L (application for non-agency adoptions) [2025] EWFC 157 (B)**
Application by foster carers to adopt three children subject to care and placement orders.
- **Bristol City Council v B & Ors [2025] EWFC 121 (B)**
Fact-finding in care proceedings concerning 9 month-old girl, to consider allegations that the father presented a sexual risk to her.
- **M (A Child) (Placement Order) [2025] EWCA Civ 214**
Appeal by aunt and uncle against making of placement order in relation to 18 month-old child.
- **Child A & Ors [2024] EWFC 385**
Care proceedings, issued following findings of abuse by father. Care orders made with plan to remove children from father's care, with a view to them being rehabilitated to mother's care.
- **Re C1 and C2 (Children: Fact Finding) [2024] EWFC 247 (B)**
Fact-finding in care proceedings concerning, in particular, cause of injury to child.
- **Bracknell Forest Council v Mother & Ors [2024] EWFC 68**
Matthew Brookes-Baker represented the father accused of injuring his less than one month old baby. The court concluded, notwithstanding the father's incriminating text messages to the mother, that there was insufficient evidence for the court to find that the injuries were inflicted by one or other of the parents and the local authority application was dismissed.
- **Re AB (A Child: Diabetic Care) [2023] EWFC 149**
Mother accused of fabricated and induced illness by covert and chronic insulin maladministration.
- **Birmingham City Council v CD & Ors [2023] EWHC 748 (Fam)**
Before Lieven J investigating the circumstances surrounding the alleged multiple injuries (head injury, multiple fractures), neglect and death of an 11 week old baby.
- **Re: A Local Authority v XX & Others [2021] EWFC 27**
Appearing before Peel J, on behalf of the Children's Guardian, in fact-finding hearing investigating the tragic circumstances surrounding the death of a baby. The case involved a range of complex medical evidence relating to causation and mechanism for injury and death.
- **Re: GC (A Child) (WITHDRAWAL OF CARE PROCEEDINGS) [2020] EWCA Civ 848**
Appearing in the Court of Appeal remotely on behalf of the 2nd Respondent Mother opposing an appeal against a Circuit Judge's decision to grant permission to a Local Authority to withdraw proceedings where findings of fact on an alleged NAI had been sought. The appeal was allowed and the matter was remitted for the fact finding hearing to take place.

- **Re W (A Child) [2020] EWCA Civ 77**

Successfully obtained a costs order against a Local Authority in the Court of Appeal.

- **Re W (A Child) [2019] EWCA Civ 1966**

Successfully appearing in the Court of Appeal on behalf of the appellant, who had previously acted in person, where final care and placement orders were set aside and the matter was remitted for another final hearing before Keehan J.

- **Re H-L (Summary Dismissal of Care Proceedings) [2019] EWCA Civ 704**

Acting on behalf of the Children's Guardian in a successful appeal against the summary dismissal of Care Proceedings by a Circuit Judge which involved allegations of NAI.

- **B (A Child: Post-Adoption Contact) [2019] EWCA Civ 29**

Acting on behalf of the Children's Guardian in the first Court Appeal decision on the issue of Post-Adoption contact since the insertion of section 51A and 51B of the Adoption and Children Act 2002 by the Children and Families Act 2014.

- **CCC v C (2019)**

Care proceedings in the High Court involving allegations of FII and issues relating to underlying medical conditions to include hEDS and cEDS. Matthew was led by Aidan Vine QC from Chambers in representing the mother. Following the conclusion of the Fact Finding hearing the Local Authority accepted that they could not prove threshold and the case was dismissed by Keehan J.

- **NCC v S & Others (2019)**

Care proceedings involving life threatening head injuries to a baby sustained through shaking. Matthew represented the Children's Guardian in this case which involved complex medical evidence surrounding the causation and mechanism for the injury.

Private Law Children

Matthew is instructed in a range of private law cases which involve for example:

- Implacable hostility and alienation.
- Fact finding hearings.
- Allegations of serious sexual abuse.
- Long running and entrenched contact and residence disputes.
- External and Internal relocation cases. Successfully representing parents where there is an issue relating to one parent wishing to relocate to another area or location with the children

Notable Private Law Children cases

- **F v M & Ors [2024] EWFC 355 (B)**

Final hearing of private law proceedings, in case involving long-standing parental conflict.

- **F v M [2023] EWFC 252**

Allegations made by both parties of alienating behaviours, coercive control and emotional and physical harm of the children.

- **B v B (2019)**

Private law case involving serious allegations of sexual abuse of children by their father. Matthew successfully represented the father in the fact finding hearing where the court made no findings and direct contact with his children was re-instated after a 7 month absence.

Direct Access

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

Memberships

- Lincon's Inn
- The Midland Circuit
- BMC

Education

- Exeter University

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