



## Nick Goodwin QC

Call: 1995 / QC: 2014

Nick is a leading family law silk with a substantial first instance and appellate practice, primarily in the law relating to children. His advocacy is measured, subtle and firm. Out of court he is noted for his thorough paperwork and excellent client relationships.

He took silk in 2014 and now routinely appears in the most complex and serious cases typically involving allegations of inflicted injury and abuse. He undertakes increasing amounts of appellate work in the Court of Appeal often with technical argument on difficult points of law.

In 2016 he was appointed a Deputy High Court Judge, sitting exclusively in the Family Division, having previously sat as a Recorder since 2010.

The legal directories (see below) note the respect he commands from judges and opponents alike, as well as his meticulous preparation, careful paperwork and skill as an advocate.

## Public Law Children

Nick represent parents, children and local authorities in public law proceedings involving allegations of homicide, inflicted injury, sexual abuse and factitious/induced illness. He has an excellent grasp of the medical issues arising in such cases and has acquired particularly extensive experience in the cross-examination of pathologists and experts in inflicted head injury.

He has appeared in many adoption cases where there are competing arguments for the child to be brought up within the birth family. In 2018 this side of his practice included an appeal regarding post-adoption contact under s.51A Children Act 1989 – the first time the Court of Appeal considered this new statutory provision.

### London

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## Notable Public Law Children cases

- **Re A (No. 2) (Children: Findings of Fact) [2019] EWCA Civ 1947**  
Appeal against findings made of sexual assault and homicide in respect of a 10 yr old girl found deceased in her bedroom with neck and genital injuries. The Court of Appeal remitted the case for an unprecedented third fact-finding hearing before a (third) High Court judge.
- **Re D (Fact-Finding Appeal) [2019] EWCA Civ 2302**  
Successful appeal on behalf of a mother before the Court of Appeal against first instance findings of complicity in sexual abuse.
- **Salford City Council v NV & M (Deprivation of Liberty in Scotland) [2019] EWHC 1510**  
Legal argument regarding the lawfulness of a placement in Scotland of an English child under the inherent jurisdiction where the child had been deprived of her liberty and the Scottish court had yet to determine whether the nobile officium jurisdiction could be exercised.
- **Re B (A Child) (Post - Adoption Contact) [2019] EWCA Civ 29**  
First Court of Appeal authority in relation to the provisions of s.51A Adoption and Children Act 2002 relating to post-adoption contact.
- **Re B-P (Children) (Adoption or Fostering) [2018] EWCA Civ 2042**  
Successful appeal on behalf of a local authority against a first instance refusal to make a placement order.

## Private Law Children

Nick is also much in demand for private law cases involving issues of custody, contact, international relocation and allegations of abuse.

## Notable Private Law Children cases

- **Re M [2019]**  
Contact proceedings involving allegations of sexual abuse made against the mother's partner and a long history of hostility and obstruction by both parents.
- **Re Z [2019]**  
Contact proceedings initiated through the Central Authority pursuant to Article 21 of the 1980 Hague Convention.
- **Re S [2019]**  
Successful application for contact on behalf of a father in the face of implacable hostility by the mother and an adverse CAFCASS report.

- **Re R [2018]**  
Complex international relocation case involving polygamous marriage, allegations of coercion and grooming.
- **F v F [2013] EWHC 2683**  
Successful application on behalf of a father for an order permitting the children to have the MMR vaccination in the face of opposition from the mother.

## International Family Law

Nick accepts instructions in all aspects of international family law.

### Notable International Family Law cases

- **Re R [2018]**  
Complex international relocation case involving polygamous marriage, contempt of court and allegations of coercion and grooming.
- **Re GP (A Child) [2017] EWCA Civ 1677**  
Case in the Court of Appeal involving 1980 Hague Convention defence under Article 13(b) – grave risk that return order would expose child to physical or psychological harm or otherwise place the child in an intolerable position, where the abducting parent had already been sentenced to imprisonment in her home country for a previous abduction and the first instance court had insufficiently analysed the practicalities of a return order on the child.

## Family Finance

Nick accepts instructions in cases involving legal argument about nullity/divorce and wider jurisdictional problems.

### Notable Family Finance cases

- **HM Attorney General v Akhter v Anor [2020] EWCA Civ 122**  
Acted as amicus curiae to the Court of Appeal in a landmark case concerning the availability of a decree of nullity after an Islamic marriage. Complex legal argument required with detailed analysis of the Marriage Acts 1753 to 1949 and applying principles of domestic and European Law under ECHR.
- **Hayatleh v Mofdy [2017] EWCA Civ 70**  
Court of Appeal case regarding the validity in English law of a marriage conducted in Syria and whether a decree of nullity should be granted, alternatively a declaration of ‘non-marriage’.

## Direct Access

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

## Appointments

- Deputy High Court Judge (2016)
- Recorder (Family and Crime) (2010)

## Memberships

- FLBA

## Education

- MA, Oxford University

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