

Tom Harrill

Year of Call: 2013

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Overview

Tom practices exclusively in Family law and specialises in matters related to children. He has a busy practice and is known for his pragmatic, tactical approach and keen attention to detail in even the most factually complex cases.

Tom runs Chambers' Family law training programme. He regularly speaks on all aspects of Family law to solicitors and other professionals.

Practice Areas

Public Law Children

Tom is regularly instructed to represent parents, local authorities, children, and interveners in care proceedings, from the first hearing to contested interim hearings, fact finding hearings and final hearings.

Tom has recently been instructed in cases involving:

- Serious non-accidental injury to children (including multiple fractures and brain injury)
- Serious sexual abuse
- Cross-jurisdictional terrorism and wardship
- Trafficking and modern-day slavery
- International child abduction
- Issues under the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Act 2008
- Chronic neglect
- Domestic violence
- Contested applications for adoption orders

Court of Protection

Tom often acts for protected parties via the Official Solicitor in claims linked to, or arising out of, care proceedings. He has particular experience in cases involving vulnerable adults who have been subject to alleged trafficking and modern-day slavery and the interplay between the Mental Capacity Act and the Inherent Jurisdiction of the High Court of Justice.

Recent cases:

A & B (Fact Finding: Head, Bony, Eye and Soft Tissue Injuries) [2020] EWFC 104

To find out more, email familyclerks@stiveschambers.co.uk.

Private Law Children

Tom is experienced in acting for parents, children and members of the extended family in all aspects of private-law disputes. He is sensitive toward the particular challenges which are posed in private law litigation whilst maintaining a tactically-driven approach. Tom prefers to be instructed at an early stage in private proceedings and to work in partnership with his solicitors so that his clients have the benefit of their full legal team.

Tom has recently been instructed in cases with issues including:

- Alleged serious physical and sexual violence
- Alleged parental alienation
- Alleged drug and alcohol misuse
- Internal and external relocation, including to non-Hague Convention countries
- Challenging section 7 reports
- Transfer of living arrangements
- Contact
- Schooling
- Change of name
- Declarations of parentage
- Special guardianship

Recent cases:

Re: A (Surrogacy: s.54 Criteria) [2020] EWHC 1426 (Fam)

Re C (A Child: Parental Order & Child Arrangements Order) [2020] EWHC 2141 (Fam)

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Qualifications

University of Birmingham: BA English, First Class Honours (2011)

University of Birmingham: Graduate Diploma in Law, Commendation (2012)

University of Law, Birmingham: BPTC, Very Competent (2013)

Memberships

The Midland Circuit

Honourable Society of Lincoln’s Inn

Family Law Bar Association

Scholarships/Awards

Worcestershire Law Society Awards 2023 – Barrister of the Year

Honourable Society of Lincoln's Inn: Sir Roger Cholmeley Scholar 2013

Honourable Society of Lincoln's Inn: Lord Denning Scholar 2012

Recommendations

Chambers and Partners 2023: "Tom is kind and empathetic; he is particularly good with vulnerable clients. He is also willing to 'go the extra mile'." "A go-to for private law children work. Tom is a robust advocate and counsel who goes out of his way to assist instructing solicitors prior to and after hearings." "Tom's preparedness is outstanding."

Legal 500 2023: "Tom is an extremely good and capable advocate. His preparation and attention to detail is second to none. He is calm with clients and delivers clients' arguments to the court precisely and effectively. His knowledge makes clients feel at ease from the minute they meet him."

Chambers & Partners 2022: "Tom is an excellent advocate who will put an exceptional amount of effort into understanding and preparing a case." "He provides excellent pre-hearing and post-hearing care and service." "Tom is an excellent communicator and is also very sensible and pragmatic in his advice."

Legal 500 2022: "Tom is an impressive, reassuring, and commanding advocate. He has a meticulous attention to detail and is thoroughly prepared with a confident presence. Authoritative and eminently sensible."

Legal 500 2021: "Unflappable and authoritative, with a thoughtful and intellectual approach to complex cases."

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