



# Elizabeth Isaacs QC

Year of Call: 1998 | QC: 2013

Telephone: 0121 236 0863

Email Address: [elizabeth.isaacs@stiveschambers.co.uk](mailto:elizabeth.isaacs@stiveschambers.co.uk)

## Overview

Elizabeth is a specialist child law silk and sits as a Family Division Deputy High Court Judge. She has an established national reputation for a compassionate, pragmatic and strategic approach, excellent advocacy and forensic preparation in complex public law cases. Elizabeth has substantial expertise in acting for all parties in complex care, adoption and wardship proceedings and has a detailed knowledge of the legal and social care issues relating to local authority planning and decision making for children.

## Practice Areas

### Public Law Children

Elizabeth is a specialist child law silk and sits as a Family Division Deputy High Court Judge. She has an established national reputation for a compassionate, pragmatic and strategic approach, excellent advocacy and forensic preparation in complex public law cases. Elizabeth has substantial expertise in acting for all parties in complex care, adoption and wardship proceedings and has a detailed knowledge of the legal and social care issues relating to local authority planning and decision making for children.

She recently acted for respondents in Operation Satchel and Operation Directed, the two largest public law cases heard to date in the UK Family courts.

Particular areas of interest include:

- Child death
- Serious physical injury
- Allegations of physical, emotional and sexual abuse
- Fabricated/Induced Illness (FII)
- Toxicology and poisoning
- Judicial review
- Human rights issues
- Disclosure and Public Interest Immunity (PII) issues relating to children
- LGBT and Modern Families parenting issues

Elizabeth is the head of the Chambers Childcare Group and a member of Chambers Management Committee.

In 2017 Elizabeth was shortlisted for 'Family Silk of the Year' at the Jordans Family Law Awards, in 2018 she was the

'Regional/Scottish Silk of the year' at the Legal 500 UK Awards and in 2019 was shortlisted again for the same award.

## Notable Cases

[Re C \(Declaration of Parentage: Written Consent\) \[2019\] EWHC 648 \(Fam\)](#)

M v W, C & Secretary of State for Health [2019] EWHC 648 (Fam)

Rochdale Borough Council v F & Others [2018] EWHC 2996 (Fam)

[Carmarthenshire CC v Y and Others \[2017\] EWFC 36](#)

[Re Z \(A Child\) \(No 2\) \[2016\] EWHC 1191 \(Fam\)](#)

[Re N-S \(Children\) \[2017\] EWCA Civ 1121](#)

[Re AD, AE, AF, AG & AH \(HFEA 2008\) \[2017\] EWHC 1782 \(Fam\)](#)

[Re P-K \(Children\) \[2017\] EWCA Civ 965](#)

RE M (A CHILD) sub nom (1) H (2) B v (1) S (2) M (A CHILD BY HER GUARDIAN) [2015] EWFC 36

[RE Z \(A Child\) \[2015\] EWFC 73](#)

RE F (A CHILD) (International Relocation Cases) sub nom DF v N B-F [2015] EWCA Civ 882

Re X (A Child) (Surrogacy: Time Limit) [2014] EWHC 3135 (Fam)

Re B (A Child) [2014] EWHC B1 (Fam) Re S (A Child) [2013] EWCA Civ 1073

[SMBC v RG et al \[2013\] EWHC 2373 \(COP\)](#)

[Re M \(A Child\) \[2012\] EWCA Civ 446](#)

S v Z [2012] EWHC 84 (Fam) Re D O'H (Children) [2011] EWCA Civ 1343

[Re L \(Duty to the Court of a Psychologist\) \[2011\] EWHC B29 \(Fam\)](#)

[Re C and D \(Photographs of Injuries\) \[2010\] EWHC B27\(Fam\)](#)

[Re X, Y and Z \(Children\) \[2010\] EWHC B12 \(Fam\)](#)

Re W (Care: Threshold Criteria) [2007] 2 FLR 98 (CA)

Re B (Appeals: Lack of Reasons) [2003] 2 FLR 1035 (CA)

## Private Law Children

Elizabeth is a specialist child law silk and sits as a Family Division Deputy High Court Judge. She has an established national reputation for a pragmatic, robust and strategic approach, excellent advocacy and forensic preparation. She is highly regarded for her personable and compassionate style with clients, and works collaboratively with solicitors and junior counsel in tactically planning cases as a team from the very outset of her involvement.

Particular areas of interest include:

- LGBT and Modern Families parenting issues
- Surrogacy and fertility law

- Parental order applications
- Parental alienation and emotionally conflicted children
- Disputes about habitual residence
- Domestic and international relocation
- Disputes about education, religion and medical issues

Elizabeth is an expert authority in the development of the law relating to surrogacy; she was leading counsel in the recent groundbreaking cases of [Re X \(A Child\) \(Surrogacy: Time Limit\) \[2014\] EWHC 3135 \(Fam\)](#) and [Re Z \(No 2\) \(a child\) \[2016\] EWHC 1191 \(fam\)](#) (which led to the Government's revision of the law prohibiting single people from applying for parental orders).

Elizabeth is also regularly instructed in cases following breakdown of surrogacy arrangements or same-sex parenting arrangements.

Elizabeth is the head of the Chambers Childcare Group and a member of Chambers Management Committee.

In 2017 Elizabeth was shortlisted for 'Family Silk of the Year' at the Jordans Family Law Awards, in 2018 she was the 'Regional/Scottish Silk of the Year' at the Legal 500 UK Awards and in 2019 she was shortlisted again for the same award.

Elizabeth is [Direct Access](#) trained and is therefore happy and able to accept instructions from prospective clients directly.

### Notable Cases

[Re C \(Declaration of Parentage: Written Consent\) \[2019\] EWHC 648 \(Fam\)](#)

M v W, C & Secretary of State for Health [2019] EWHC 648 (Fam)

Rochdale Borough Council v F & Others [2018] EWHC 2996 (Fam)

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[Re Z \(A Child\) \(No 2\) \[2016\] EWHC 1191 \(Fam\)](#)

[Re N-S \(Children\) \[2017\] EWCA Civ 1121](#)

[Re AD, AE, AF, AG & AH \(HFEA 2008\) \[2017\] EWHC 1782 \(Fam\)](#)

[Re P-K \(Children\) \[2017\] EWCA Civ 965](#)

RE M (A CHILD) sub nom (1) H (2) B v (1) S (2) M (A CHILD BY HER GUARDIAN) [2015] EWFC 36

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[Re X, Y and Z \(Children\) \[2010\] EWHC B12 \(Fam\)](#)

Re W (Care: Threshold Criteria) [2007] 2 FLR 98 (CA)

## Qualifications

BA (Hons) Psychology (Dunelm)

MA Social Work

LLB (Hons)

## Appointments

Bencher of Lincoln's Inn 2019

Deputy High Court Judge (Family Division) 2016

Public and Private Family Law Recorder (SE Circuit) 2012

Crown Court Recorder (SE Circuit) 2009

Silk Member of The Family Justice Council (2014-2019)

## Memberships

Family Law Bar Association

Association of Lawyers for Children

LGBT Family Law Institute – UK & Ireland

## Awards

Shortlisted for the Legal 500 Silk of the Year 2019 (Regions)

Winner of the Legal 500 UK Silk of the year 2018 (Regions)

# Publications

Clarke, Hall & Morrison on Children – contributing editor

Family Court Practice (Jordans) – contributing editor

[Challenging and Defending Local Authority Child Care Decisions](#) (April 2013) Jordans Publishing (Co-author)

[Social Work Decision Making: A Guide for Child Care Lawyers](#) (2nd Edition March 2012) Jordans Publishing (Co-author) – “A valuable addition to any Childcare library.”

# Privacy Notice

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# Recommendations

**Chambers & Partners 2020:** “She has an excellent in-depth knowledge of the law and social work practice, and tenaciously fights her client’s corner in a firm and balanced manner. She’s also extremely personable and a great team player.” “She’s a phenomenal individual who mastered the issues very quickly.”

**Legal 500 2019:** “An enormously effective trial advocate.”

**Chambers & Partners 2019:** “She fights the client’s corner in a firm and balanced manner. She is also extremely personable and a great team player.” “She has an excellent grasp of the law and is also a brilliant strategist.”

**Legal 500 2018:** “Exceptionally clever; a strategic thinker who is willing to push the boundaries in her approach to cases.”

**Chambers & Partners 2018:** “A joy to work with. She is incredibly collaborative and gets the best out of the whole team. She is massively bright and has an ability to think outside of the box.” “She has a superb work ethic and retains her balance, judgement and humour in stressful situations.”

**Legal 500 2017:** “A Titan in children’s work.”

**Legal 500 2016:** “She radiates creative energy and has one of the quickest minds in the business.”

**Legal 500 2016:** “Her expertise in care work includes complex cases involving child fatalities, serious injuries and sexual abuse.”

**Chambers & Partners 2016:** “She would always be my first choice – an excellent advocate. She is very well prepared, has very good client care skills and is very approachable. She is bright and passionate about what she does. I would go to her with any family matter that needed silk.” “I would single her out as a really strong, feisty advocate who is incredibly thorough in her preparation and extremely effective.”

**Chambers & Partners 2015:** “Continues to be regarded as a go-to barrister for complex children matters involving death and serious injury. She has a keen interest in the academic side of litigation and is a thorough and versatile advocate.”

**Legal 500 2014:** “Approachable and a pleasure to deal with.”

**Chambers & Partners 2014:** “A child law expert in care proceedings as well as child abduction and forced marriages...and she is well versed in dealing with cases concerning learning disabilities. A competent lawyer who handles her clients very well and provides sensible advice.”

**Legal 500 2013:** New silk Elizabeth Isaacs QC is “a brilliant barrister.”

**Chambers & Partners 2013:** “A former social worker, she is valued for the unique perspective that her previous job affords her. Those that use her do so as “she is very personable and has very good judgement.”

**Legal 500 2012:** Elizabeth Isaacs “fights her corner with determination.”

**Chambers & Partners 2012:** “Personable, sensible, and highly knowledgeable,” she is “excellent with clients” and “fights their corner doggedly.” As a former social worker, she brings to the table invaluable added insight into the workings of the care system.

**Legal 500 2011:** “Superb”



LGBT FAMILY LAW INSTITUTE  
UK & IRELAND