



# Mark Cooper

Year of Call: 2009

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## Overview

Mark practises exclusively in family law and specialises in matters relating to children. He has a busy practice and a reputation for providing excellent client care and being thoroughly prepared. Mark aims to provide realistic and pragmatic advice whilst always being prepared to fight his client's case.

Mark is a care specialist and in recent years has regularly appeared in lengthy and complex proceedings. He has been instructed in cases involving the most serious of allegations including the death of a child, brain injuries and inter-familial sexual abuse. Mark has been led in eight cases in the last two years, including four cases in which he was led by Queen's Counsel.

Mark accepts instructions on behalf of children in private law proceedings relating to child arrangements orders and special guardianship orders. He has particular experience of protracted proceedings involving intractable disputes and serious allegations of sexual and physical abuse. Mark also acts for parents and other family members in adoption cases.

Outside of his practice, Mark is the Secretary of the West Midlands Family Law Bar Association. As such he is responsible for organising training events and functions for the local family Bar.

Within Chambers, Mark is the Equality & Diversity Officer, Diversity Data Officer and Social Secretary.

## Practice Areas

### Public Law Children

Mark practises exclusively in family law and specialises in matters relating to children. He has a busy practice and a reputation for providing excellent client care and being thoroughly prepared. Mark aims to provide realistic and pragmatic advice whilst always being prepared to fight his client's case.

#### Children: Public Law

Mark is a public law specialist and is regularly instructed to represent parents, local authorities, children and interveners in care proceedings. He is also experienced in representing vulnerable adults and older children who are competent to provide their own instructions. Mark has experience of cases involving:

- multiple inflicted injuries;
- death of a child;
- serious head injuries, including shaking;

- fabricated or induced illness (FII);
- poisoning;
- sexual abuse;
- female genital mutilation (FGM);
- inter-sibling sexual activity; and
- other forms of significant harm to children.

In the last few years, Mark has been led by Queen’s Counsel and senior junior counsel in a number of complex and often lengthy care cases.

Mark also accepts instructions from parents, local authorities, guardians and interveners in secure accommodation proceedings. He has lectured on secure accommodation at seminars hosted by Chambers.

Mark has experience of representing all parties in forced marriage cases, including cases with international elements where the inherent jurisdiction of the High Court has been invoked.

#### **Reported cases:**

[Re D & Ors \(Children\) \[2017\] EWFC B87 \(06 April 2017\)](#)

[Gloucestershire County Council v M & Ors \[2015\] EWFC B177](#)

#### **Notable Unreported Cases**

##### **Re A [2018-]**

Mark is being led by Jeremy Weston representing a parent accused of causing multiple injuries to a child including skull fractures. The case is being heard by a High Court Judge.

##### **Re P [2019]**

Mark was led by Tracy Lakin in three-week a finding of fact hearing before a High Court Judge. The allegations included cruelty and torture.

##### **Re A [2018-9]**

Mark represented a baby who has sustained multiple life-changing injuries including multiple skull fractures. Mark was led by Matthew Maynard for the finding of fact hearing.

##### **Re S [2017-19]**

Mark was led by Jeremy Weston QC representing a parent in a complex sexual abuse case involving multiple families. The case was heard by a High Court Judge and the finding of fact hearing was one of the longest ever heard in the Family Court.

##### **Re O [2017-18]**

Mark was led by Jeremy Weston QC representing a parent in a case involving the death of a baby following a serious brain injury before a Deputy High Court Judge.

##### **Re B [2018]**

Mark was led by Jeremy Weston QC representing a parent in a complex FII case, which included various mental health issues.

##### **Re F [2017]**

Mark was led by Matthew Maynard representing the children in a complex FII case, which included an allegation of poisoning.

##### **Re W [2017]**

Mark was led by Justine Lattimer representing a parent in an unusual FII case including elements of fabricated sexual abuse and a

'staged' suffocation.

#### **Re M [2016]**

Mark represented a local authority in a case involving extreme chastisement of two children, including allegations akin to waterboarding.

## **Private Law Children**

Mark accepts instructions on behalf of children in private law cases pursuant to FPR r.16.4. He has significant experience in these sorts of cases, especially when the other parties are litigants in person. Mark has concluded several cases of this nature which have been in Court for more than two years.

Mark also accepts instructions from all parties in private law matters relating to adoption.

#### **Notable cases:**

#### **Re A [2017-2018]**

Mark represented a child in private law proceedings for two years, following two earlier years of implacable hostility and allegations of physical abuse.

#### **Re J [2018]**

Mark represented two children in multi-party private law proceedings, which included a 10-day finding of fact hearing to determine allegations of sexual abuse and child rape.

#### **Re A [2014-15]**

Mark represented an African child who had been the subject of a "botched" adoption process in the country of his birth. The case bore the hallmarks of child trafficking and included a finding of fact hearing to determine whether the child's mother had in fact died in Africa.

## **Qualifications**

MA (Oxon)

Graduate Diploma in Law, Manchester Law School

Bar Vocational Course, Manchester Law School

# Memberships

Midland Circuit

Family Law Bar Association

Secretary of the West Midlands Family Law Bar Association

The Honourable Society of Gray's Inn

Birmingham City School of Law Advisory Board

Local Family Justice Board (representative for the Bar)

FreeBar

# Recommendations

**Chambers and Partners 2020:** "He is personable, extremely well prepared and very focused on the right outcome."

**Legal 500 2019:** "He provides first-class client care."

**Chambers and Partners 2019:** "Calm and compelling, he grasps the issues in a case and wins the confidence of judges." "His cross-examination has a pinpoint accuracy which leaves the court in no doubt as to who is in control of the case."

# Privacy Notice

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