

Vanessa Meachin KC

Year of Call: 1990
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Care and adoption

Vanessa is experienced in complex public law cases under the children and adoption legislation. She has 26 years of experience of appearing for parents, other relatives, local authorities and children. She routinely appears in the High court in relation to cases relating to the death of a child by various mechanisms (including shaking, suffocation, possible consumption of drugs or infection caused by starvation). In other cases, where the child has not died, she has considerable experience of allegations of serious physical abuse (burns, bruising, head injuries, multiple fractures and attempted suffocation) sexual abuse (parent and or sibling), emotional abuse (including allegations of demonic possession), neglect, domestic violence and factitious illness. These cases will routinely involve the cross examination of a number of medical experts from multi disciplines.

She has extensive experience in large-scale and highly complex public law proceedings, including some of the most significant multi-child operational care cases undertaken in England and Wales to date. She is regularly instructed in cases arising from major safeguarding investigations involving numerous children, multiple intervenors and parallel criminal or regulatory investigations, often attracting heightened public, media and judicial scrutiny. Her expertise includes managing vast evidential landscapes, sensitive disclosure issues and complex case management within proceedings of exceptional scale and importance.

She has acted in cases where the welfare of the children has required exploration and assessment of relatives abroad. This has included consideration of jurisdictional issues as between England and Wales and countries such as Iraq, Latvia and Lithuania.

She has acted in such cases involving Human Trafficking and cases involving the use of the Inherent Jurisdiction to enable a child to be securely accommodated in another country.

Her practice has included protective orders for young females encompassing forced marriage, female genital mutilation, declarations that a marriage was unlawful (coercion and rape) and reporting restriction orders.

She has represented parents from differing economic, cultural, social background and ages. Some may have issues such as drug, alcohol dependency, mental health difficulties, language difficulties or a combination of these problems.

Recommendations

Vanessa Meachin KC is a prominent family law specialist whose practice spans care, adoption and private children work. Her cases often concern serious allegations, including non-accidental injuries and fabricated illnesses.
Strengths: "Vanessa is simply top-tier."
"Vanessa is a fierce advocate."
"Vanessa is always well prepared and has a fantastic way with clients."

Chambers UK 2025/Family/Children/Midlands Bar/Band 1

Strengths: "Her advice and advocacy are of the highest quality. She is always easy to contact and discuss a matter with. Vanessa is also approachable and well-liked by clients." "Vanessa is an exceptional advocate. She recognises when a case could, and should be settled but is equally prepared for a battle if necessary."

Chambers UK 2024/Family/Children/Midlands Bar/Band 1

Strengths:
"Vanessa is brilliant, she is one of the best advocates I have ever come across."
"Vanessa presents her clients' cases in a balanced but strong way. She has a fine attention to detail and is a persuasive advocate."
"Vanessa is an outstanding advocate with a very confident and calm approach to extremely challenging cases. She is an inspiring professional to observe and work alongside."

Chambers UK 2023/Family/Matrimonial Finance/Midlands Bar/Band 1
Chambers UK 2023/Family/Children/Midlands Bar

Strengths: "She has great attention to detail, a lovely manner with clients and she's very good on her feet and is very clear, measured and unflappable." "She's very forensic and cool-minded." "She'll ensure that no stone is left unturned while also being the nicest barrister you'll come across."

Chambers UK 2022/Family/Matrimonial Finance/Midlands Bar
Chambers UK 2022/Family/Children/Midlands Bar

Her cases often concern serious allegations including human trafficking and physical or sexual abuse.
Strengths: "Simply superb. Measured, calm, very personable and responsive. She works with you as a team and is flexible and always on hand to contact for advice." "Vanessa's ability to analyse a case and its central issues is outstanding. She has an excellent rapport with clients."

Chambers UK 2021/Family/Matrimonial Finance/Midlands Bar
Chambers UK 2021/Family/Children/Midlands Bar

Strengths: "She's a well-prepared and robust advocate, who is very client-friendly and skilled at cross-examination." "She has a great client manner and is a sought-after advocate."

Chambers UK 2020/Family/Matrimonial/Midlands Bar

"She is brilliant. She is great with clients and her real skill is that although she has the most complex cases she is able to distil matters down and make it simple for the judge." "She is known for her careful and detailed preparation. A confident and experienced advocate."

Chambers UK 2019/Family/Matrimonial/Midlands Bar

Recent cases have concerned serious allegations of physical and sexual abuse, as well as the death of a child.
Strengths: "A well-prepared and robust advocate, who is very client-friendly and skilled at cross-examination. Her star is in the ascendancy." "Equally excellent at matrimonial finance and child care work."

Chambers UK 2018/Family/Matrimonial/Midlands Bar

Strengths: "Absolutely excellent, her preparation is second to none and her advocacy is excellent." "Forensic, detailed and good with clients."'

Chambers UK 2017/Family/Matrimonial/Midlands Bar

'Continually gives a first class service to clients.'

Chambers UK 2016/Family/Matrimonial/Midlands Bar

'hailed for her committed and dogged approach and clients are particularly pleased to find a barrister who fights their corner with such vigour. Her practice encompasses care, matrimonial finance and private law children act applications'

Chambers UK 2013/Family/Matrimonial/Midlands Bar

'draws praise as an excellent and knowledgeable barrister who is really good with clients and court staff. Her broad experience allows her to undertake work relating to child care and adoption as well as matrimonial finance'

Chambers UK 2012/Family/Matrimonial/Midlands Bar

'She specialises in high net worth ancillary relief and has particular experience in cases involving business assets' and 'her knowledge, experience and gravitas puts clients at ease'

Chambers UK 2011/Family/Matrimonial/Midlands Bar

'Vanessa is a highly skilled advocate and her client care is of the highest quality. She is able to digest vast amounts of complex papers and gain a clear understanding of complex medical information.'

Legal 500 2025/Divorce and Financial Remedy/Leading Silks/Midlands Circuit - Tier 1

Vanessa Meachin KC in ranked in **Legal 500 2025**/Family: Children and Domestic Violence/Leading Silks/Midlands Circuit - Tier 1

Vanessa Meachin KC is a 'passionate advocate' who handles a mix of care, adoption, and private law children matters. 'Vanessa is an outstanding advocate with a confident and calm approach to extremely challenging cases. Her ability to get straight to the key points in complex matters demonstrates her extensive skill.'

Legal 500 2024/Family: Children and Domestic Violence/Leading Silks/Midlands Circuit - Tier 1

Vanessa Meachin KC heads the practice and regularly assists clients in complex matrimonial finance matters.

Legal 500 2024/Divorce and Financial Remedy/Leading Silks/Midlands Circuit - Tier 1

Vanessa combines excellent client care with a forensic approach to her cases. She is exceptionally thorough and committed and does not shy away from thorny and difficult issues.'

Legal 500 2023/Divorce and Financial Remedy/Leading Silks/Midlands Circuit - Tier 1

'Vanessa combines excellent client care with a forensic approach to her cases. She is exceptionally thorough and committed and does not shy away from thorny and difficult issues.'

The team is led by the 'skilled and always thoroughly prepared'. Vanessa Meachin KC who handles a mix of care, adoption, matrimonial finance, and private law children's cases.

Legal 500 2023/Child Law (Public and Private)/Leading Silks/Midlands Circuit - Tier 1

'Vanessa is a stellar advocate with an unerring ability to distill the most complex of cases into an easily digested, straightforward, and persuasive narrative.'

Legal 500 2022/Divorce and Financial Remedy/Leading Silks/Midlands Circuit

'Vanessa is a stellar advocate with an unerring ability to distill the most complex of cases into an easily digested, straightforward, and persuasive narrative.'

Legal 500 2022/Child Law (public and private)/Leading Silks/Midlands Circuit

'A brilliant advocate whose knowledge and application of the law is first-class.'

Legal 500 2021/Child Law (Public and Private)/Leading Silks

Legal 500 2021/Divorce and Financial Remedy/Leading Silks

`An outstanding advocate who provides awe-inspiring written work.'

Legal 500 2020/Family and children/Leading Silks

'A stellar advocate.'

Legal 500 2018/19/Family and children/Leading Juniors (Vanessa Meachin took silk in 2018)

`An unyielding and concise litigator.'

Legal 500 2017/Family and children/Leading Junior

'Her practice spans care, adoption, finance and private law children cases'

Legal 500 2016/Family and children/Leading Junior

'The "client-friendly" Vanessa Meachin has an "encyclopaedic knowledge of the law"'

Legal 500 2013

'a strong advocate who also has a keen eye for settlement opportunities'

Legal 500 2012

'...sensible approach often assists settlement but she is prepared for a contest if necessary'

Legal 500 2011

'Vanessa Meachin consistently delivers quality advice and representation in a personable but business-like manner'

Legal 500 2010

'A well-prepared and robust advocate, very client friendly and skilled at cross examination', 'she does everything in family law and handles it brilliantly'

Thomson Reuters Report 2017

Academic qualifications

- LLB (Hons)

Professional qualifications & appointments

- Recorder (2009) - South Eastern Circuit

Professional bodies

- Association of Lawyers for Children
- Family Law Association
- Legal Committee member of British Agencies for Adoption and Fostering.