

Laura Scott

Year of Call: 2001
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Overview

Laura's practice encompasses a wide range of cases in both the Family Court and the Court of Protection. Within family law, Laura has decades of experience representing parents, grandparents, children, extended family members and local authorities in all aspects of the law relating to children, including those cases that involve deprivations of liberty. More recently, Laura has broadened her practice to include work in the Court of Protection in matters relating to welfare, property and finances.

Formerly at two well-known London sets, Laura now lives in the Midlands and joined 3PB in August 2022. Laura has been consistently ranked as a top family law barrister by legal researchers at Legal 500, focusing on her public and private child care work and cases involving allegations of the most serious abuse.

Vulnerable Witness Training

Laura has successfully completed the 'Advocacy and the Vulnerable National Training Programme for the Family Court' with the Inns of Court College of Advocacy and Family Law Bar Association.

Recommendations

"Laura is technically excellent, incredibly thorough, and always gives clear, strategic advice. Her advocacy is quietly powerful, and she has a very balanced, reassuring approach with clients, exactly what is needed in sensitive family proceedings."

Legal 500 2027/Family: Children and Domestic Abuse/Midland Circuit

'Laura demonstrates exceptional advocacy skills, consistently presenting clients' cases with clarity, precision and confidence. She has an excellent approach to client care, demonstrating genuine empathy and understanding, particularly in sensitive cases involving domestic abuse or vulnerable clients, and she has a good, through understanding of family law and her ability to reference relevant case law and apply it effectively in proceedings.'

Legal 500 2026/Family: Children and Domestic Violence/Leading Juniors/Midlands

Laura Scott specialises in cases involving older children and young people, including sexual or criminal exploitation.

'Laura is very thorough in her preparation and knowledge of cases. She is an excellent advocate, always well prepared and ready to argue a case when necessary, with a fantastic knowledge of the law and case law in support. She is fabulous with clients, putting them at ease very quickly and explaining each and every step before and after hearings.'

Legal 500 2025/Family: Children and Domestic Violence/Leading Juniors/Midlands

Laura has wisdom and knowledge and high emotional intelligence. She is supportive yet controlling and puts situations into

perspective. Her preparation is first class, and she pays attention to detail.'

Legal 500 2024/Family: Children and Domestic Violence/Leading Juniors/Midlands

"Highly recommended for abuse cases"
Legal 500

"Her down-to-earth and realistic approach together with her courtroom skills set her far above her peers."
Legal 500

"She is quick to see straight into the heart of the matter, and is a good judge of character."
Legal 500

"Extremely articulate and thorough."

Legal 500

"Laura Scott enters the ranking for the first time (in 2008) and is recommended for her work in care proceedings."
Legal 500

"Laura is a first rate child care lawyer, providing her clients with sensible advice and robust representation. A skilled and thorough advocate."

LinkedIn

Academic qualifications

- BPP Law School, BVC, very competent
- Royal Academy of Music, B Mus (Hons), LRAM
- Westminster University, CPE

Professional bodies

- Family Law Bar Association
- Midland Circuit
- Inner Temple

Expertise

Family

Private Law Children

Laura Scott is experienced in dealing with all aspects of child arrangements (including residence and contact, now known as 'lives with' and 'spends time with' orders), domestic violence allegations, extended family care arrangements (including grandparents' applications for contact and residence), special guardianship, private adoption and applications for permission to remove children temporarily and permanently from England. She has extensive experience of cases involving allegations of parental alienation, having been involved in one of the first cases in which alienation allegations were proved against a father and became care proceedings. In another of her cases, Laura successfully challenged allegations of alienation made against a mother previously found to have been a victim of domestic abuse.

Laura is regularly instructed in complex matters involving allegations of emotional, physical and sexual abuse, as well as cases where the representation and joinder of children to proceedings is an issue and where a change of the child's residence is contemplated.

Laura's work often involves an international element and her practice encompasses applications by parents for leave to remove children permanently or temporarily from the jurisdiction.

Non-court dispute resolution

Having trained as a mediator over a decade ago, Laura strongly believes in the importance of avoiding litigation wherever possible and will always strive to give clients realistic advice on how to achieve an outcome that will meet their children's best interests in the short and long-term. Laura offers a range of collaborative services to support separating parents, including round table discussions, non-court negotiations and single lawyer instructions for both parents; she will make recommendations for the most appropriate mediators for a family's particular issues as well as for therapeutic support where indicated. Laura supports the use of arbitration as a highly effective alternative where court proceedings are contemplated and can advise parties on who best to instruct.

Direct Access

Laura was one of the first barristers to undertake family cases via the Direct Public Access scheme and has a wealth of experience working directly with parents, collaborating with and referring to solicitors where necessary.

Reported cases:

X v Y & Others (Assisted Reproduction: Parent) [2015] EWFC 13 (Fam): High Court declarations of parentage made in respect of father whose child was conceived using donated sperm, in circumstances where he had signed a consent form, which the fertility clinic had lost.

K v P [2008] EWCA Civ 600: Court of Appeal decision relating to the length of sentence imposed in respect of breaches of a non-molestation order to which a power of arrest was attached.

Re C-J (Section 91(14) Order) [2006] EWHC 1491 (Fam); [2006] 2 FLR 1213: Contact – appropriateness of s91 (14) order – exercise of district judge's discretion.

Other cases include:

Re P [2021]: Acted for the child through their guardian in a matter where the immediate transfer of residence had been ordered after findings of parental alienation; subsequent agreement for contact with alienating parent reached through extensive negotiations with litigants in person.

Re M [2021]: Acted for a mother in a case of very serious parental alienation and unlawful retention where a local authority was compelled to take ICOs for 2 children at the court's own motion and care proceedings then followed.

Re J [2016]: Acted for the father in seeking and obtaining parental alienation and physical abuse findings against a mother.

Public Law Children

Laura acts in matters involving all aspects of care and adoption, especially complex cases where there are allegations of non-accidental injuries and physical, sexual and emotional abuse, including historic allegations. She is highly adept at working with parties that have experienced trauma, having studied extensively the effects and implications of adverse life and childhood experiences (ACE). Laura will go above and beyond to forge and develop compassionate and supportive working relationships with clients who are all too often dismissed as 'difficult' as a consequence of their own traumatic childhoods.

Laura is frequently instructed for fact-finding hearings and is adept at handling expert witnesses and voluminous medical evidence.

Laura has a particular interest and expertise in dealing with vulnerable parties and witnesses, including children and those requiring the assistance of an intermediary.

Laura regularly undertakes Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) cases.

Laura has decades of experience in case managing and advising local authorities in complex matters, including drafting threshold documents to a high standard.

In addition to care proceedings, Laura also has experience in relation to education law and provides advice and representation in this area, including where there may be cross-issues with accommodation under section 20.

Reported Cases:

P and E (Care Proceedings: Whether to Hold Fact-Finding Hearing), Re [2024] EWCA Civ 403: leading case on the importance of the court needing to establish a clear factual basis for safeguarding measures to be implemented.

A (Care and Placement Orders) [2014] EWFC B143: Care proceedings involving applications for Care and Placement Orders. Represented the paternal aunt pro bono throughout High Court appeal and subsequent proceedings.

Other cases include:

Re C [2021]: Last minute representation of intervenor in very serious NAI. Complex case involving another intervenor lacking capacity but being required to give evidence.

Re J [2016]: Represented a mother accused of causing a number of fractures to a young baby. Mother exonerated of causing the injuries or failing to seek prompt medical attention.

Re A [2015]: Acted for a local authority in the 2nd set of care proceedings less than 18 months after conclusion of the first proceedings in relation to 5 children. Mother had transitioned gender without medical supervision.

Re B [2013]: Acted for a local authority in successfully obtaining historic findings of sexual abuse made against a stepfather of an adult daughter where younger siblings were at risk and were being groomed by the father during supervised contact.

Court of Protection

Laura regularly appears in cases that involve issues of deprivations of liberty, care, deputyship, powers of attorney and residence.