

Legal 500 UK Bar 2026 results - Family law team

Group rankings

- The Legal 500 ranks our team **Tier 1** for
 - Midlands - Family: children and domestic abuse
 - Midlands - Family: divorce and financial remedy
 - Western - Family: children and domestic abuse
- Our Family: divorce and financial remedy team is ranked **Tier 2** in Western
- Our Family: children and domestic abuse team is ranked **Tier 3** in South Eastern

Individual rankings

Barristers ranked in Legal 500	Legal 500 section	Bar	2026
Gemma Farrington KC	Family: children and domestic abuse	London	Yes
Poonam Bhari	Family: children and domestic abuse	London	Yes
Adeo Fraser	Family: children and domestic abuse	Midlands	Yes
Aimee Fox	Family: children and domestic abuse	Midlands	Yes
Amy Beddis	Family: children and domestic abuse	Midlands	Yes
Andrew Duncan	Family: children and domestic abuse	Midlands	Yes
Ayesha Bell-Paris	Family: children and domestic abuse	Midlands	New
Eleanor Marsh	Family: children and domestic abuse	Midlands	Yes
Elizabeth McGrath KC	Family: children and domestic abuse	Midlands	Yes
Emma Griffiths	Family: children and domestic abuse	Midlands	Yes
Frida Dahlqvist	Family: children and domestic abuse	Midlands	Yes
Laura Scott	Family: children and domestic abuse	Midlands	Yes
Lawrence Messling	Family: children and domestic abuse	Midlands	Yes
Lucy Clayton	Family: children and domestic abuse	Midlands	Yes
Lucy Hendry KC	Family: children and domestic abuse	Midlands	Yes
Matiss Krumins	Family: children and domestic abuse	Midlands	New
Nathalie Bull	Family: children and domestic abuse	Midlands	Yes
Nicola Brown	Family: children and domestic abuse	Midlands	Yes
Nicola Martin	Family: children and domestic abuse	Midlands	Yes
Paul Froud	Family: children and domestic abuse	Midlands	Yes
Poonam Bhari	Family: children and domestic abuse	Midlands	Yes
Rachel Bloxwich	Family: children and domestic abuse	Midlands	New
Ria Herbert	Family: children and domestic abuse	Midlands	New
Sam Pentony	Family: children and domestic abuse	Midlands	Yes
Stephen Abberley	Family: children and domestic abuse	Midlands	Yes
Susan Todd	Family: children and domestic abuse	Midlands	Yes
Vanessa Meachin KC	Family: children and domestic abuse	Midlands	Yes

Alex Hodge	Family: children and domestic abuse	South Eastern	Yes
Elaine Strachan	Family: children and domestic abuse	South Eastern	Yes
Emma Griffiths	Family: children and domestic abuse	South Eastern	Yes
Gemma Farrington KC	Family: children and domestic abuse	South Eastern	Yes
Harriet Lavis	Family: children and domestic abuse	South Eastern	New
Laura Buchan	Family: children and domestic abuse	South Eastern	New
Nicola Martin	Family: children and domestic abuse	South Eastern	Yes
Sam Pentony	Family: children and domestic abuse	South Eastern	Yes
Amy Lush	Family: children and domestic abuse	Western	Yes
Elisabeth Hudson	Family: children and domestic abuse	Western	Yes
Emma Harman	Family: children and domestic abuse	Western	Yes
Emma Southern	Family: children and domestic abuse	Western	Yes
Esther Lieu	Family: children and domestic abuse	Western	New
Gemma Chapman	Family: children and domestic abuse	Western	Yes
June Venters KC	Family: children and domestic abuse	Western	New
Kellie Salter	Family: children and domestic abuse	Western	Yes
Lucy Hendry KC	Family: children and domestic abuse	Western	Yes
Nicola Frost	Family: children and domestic abuse	Western	Yes
Sarah Jennings	Family: children and domestic abuse	Western	Yes
Sarah O'Hara	Family: children and domestic abuse	Western	Yes
Steven Howard	Family: children and domestic abuse	Western	Yes
Hamish Dunlop	Family: divorce and financial remedy	London	Yes
Peter Wilkinson	Family: divorce and financial remedy	London	Yes
Aimee Fox	Family: divorce and financial remedy	Midlands	Yes
Charles Hogan	Family: divorce and financial remedy	Midlands	Yes
Davinia Riley	Family: divorce and financial remedy	Midlands	Yes
Eleanor Marsh	Family: divorce and financial remedy	Midlands	Yes
Luke Nelson	Family: divorce and financial remedy	Midlands	Yes
Michael George	Family: divorce and financial remedy	Midlands	Yes
Nathalie Bull	Family: divorce and financial remedy	Midlands	Yes
Rachel Bloxwich	Family: divorce and financial remedy	Midlands	Yes
Roger Thomas	Family: divorce and financial remedy	Midlands	Yes
Elaine Strachan	Family: divorce and financial remedy	South Eastern	Yes
Laura Buchan	Family: divorce and financial remedy	South Eastern	Yes
Louise Worton	Family: divorce and financial remedy	South Eastern	Yes
Nicola Martin	Family: divorce and financial remedy	South Eastern	Yes
Amy Beddis	Family: divorce and financial remedy	Western	Yes
Esther Lieu	Family: divorce and financial remedy	Western	Yes
Hamish Dunlop	Family: divorce and financial remedy	Western	Yes
Imogen Robins	Family: divorce and financial remedy	Western	Yes
Mark Elliott	Family: divorce and financial remedy	Western	Yes
Nicola Frost	Family: divorce and financial remedy	Western	Yes
Oliver Thorne	Family: divorce and financial remedy	Western	Yes

Team Commentary

Regional Bar > Midland Circuit > Family: children and domestic violence

– Tier 1

With 'a profound understanding of family law and non-accidental injury cases' and considerable experience in care, adoption, and private law matters **Vanessa Meachin KC** heads up the family law group at 3PB, 'an excellent set with a range of barristers of the highest quality in the field of complex care proceedings'. **Emma Griffiths** leads the children law practice, and head of chambers **Elizabeth McGrath KC** has a 'brilliant bedside manner' and an active private and public law practice, the former including cases surrounding domestic abuse, coercive and controlling behaviour, and parental alienation, and the latter demonstrating expertise in proceedings with international elements. **Lucy Hendry KC** is an 'extremely effective and dynamic advocate' and is highly proficient in representing an array of clients, including children, intervenors, and guardians, including those with cognitive and capacity issues. Turning to the juniors, **Nicola Martin** also has a broad ranging practice, encompassing care cases arising from serious and fatal injuries to children, and private law cases concerning abduction and relocation. **Aimee Fox** is highly skilled in handling proceedings centred around children with significant educational needs. **Matiss Krumins** is another notable practitioner with prowess in administrative law and judicial review proceedings - he appeared in the unusual case of *The Father v Worcestershire CC*, representing the local authority in the Supreme Court against a litigant in person, who sought the return of his children from a care order not through any family law remedy but through a writ of habeas corpus. **Lucy Clayton** has a strong focus on cases surrounding issues of parental alienation, sexual abuse, and coercive control, as well as surrogacy-related matters.

Testimonials

'Ian Charlton is always attentive and will always be available to help. Isabelle Lea is extremely good, has excellent communication and makes you feel that she has everything under control.'

'Ian Charlton is a go-to. You can completely trust his opinion.'

'David Sadler is efficient, helpful and provides excellent customer service.'

'The clerks are helpful and always willing to assist, and they will go above and beyond in order to accommodate choice of counsel. They are so helpful. Gemma Hyett is wonderful to deal with.'

'The clerks' room is excellent. Ian Charlton, Gemma Hyett, Rob Leonard and Philip Jones are exceptional and will do anything they can to help and are very approachable.'

'Isabelle Lee and Gemma Hyett are fantastic; very swift to respond and always on top of their barristers' diaries.'

'An excellent, strong clerking team. Ian Charlton is always accommodating and helpful and is extremely well supported by Isabelle Lee, Gemma Hyett, and Philip Jones who are always pleasant, responsive and helpful and cannot do enough.'

'Ian Charlton and Rob Leonard are class acts. They go the extra mile on availability as well as fee negotiation. You feel like you have a genuine relationship with them. They really look after you.'

Regional Bar > Midland Circuit > Family: divorce and financial remedy – Tier 1

'First-rate set' 3PB is highly regarded in the Midlands for its excellent track record in handling high-value divorce and financial remedy cases. **Michael George** is 'a shining light in the field of high-net-worth financial remedy work'. **Nathalie Bull** is regularly instructed in complex financial remedy cases involving international property portfolios and acquisitions of pre-marital or post-separation assets, as well as matters arising from health complexities impacting on earning capacity. **Charles Hogan**'s workload includes TOLATA, Part III and Schedule 1 claims. **Rachel Bloxwich** is well-versed in advising on complex cases involving pensions and business assets, and is often instructed on behalf of individuals who lack capacity to litigate.

Testimonials

'Ian Charlton is brilliant. He goes the extra mile on availability.'

'Ian Charlton, Gemma Hyett, and Philip Jones are exceptional.'

'Patrick Robson and Patrick Steptoe stand out as star performers, always on hand to solve problems and find a helpful way forward.'

'Isabelle Lee is professional, friendly, and a natural problem solver.'

'An excellent family set.'

'Breadth, strength and depth in all family matters.'

'Wealth of talent at all levels of seniority.'

'Amazing set.'

Regional Bar > Western Circuit > Family: children and domestic violence – Tier 1

3PB is 'an excellent chambers and a go-to for family matters'. Among the silks at the set, **Lucy Hendry KC** is praised as 'one of the best silks on the circuit'; she is a children's law specialist, frequently handling both public and private law mandates for children, interveners, and Guardians. The set is also home to **June Venters KC**, the first woman solicitor to be appointed silk before joining the bar. Among the juniors, **Sarah O'Hara** has appeared before the Court of Appeal, and her practice has a strong focus on injuries to children, including fractures, bruising, and brain injuries. 'Exceptional advocate' **Emma Harman** sits part time as a Deputy District Judge, and she practices in both public and private law, the former part of her offering covering neglect, sexual abuse, and fatal injuries to children, and the latter consisting of disputes around contact, the abduction of children, and removal of children to a different

jurisdiction. **Steven Howard**, who is 'always impeccably prepared', is predominantly active in care proceedings, while **Elisabeth Hudson** has experience in cases surrounding the Hague Convention and moving children to other countries.

Testimonials

'All of the clerks are extremely helpful and knowledgeable. Patrick Steptoe and Jess Street in particular, both of whom have been great to work with. They respond promptly and are happy to help.'

'The clerks' room is excellent. Ian Charlton, Gemma Hyett, Robert Leonard and Philip Jones are exceptional. They will do anything they can to help and are very approachable.'

'Very good, will always go the extra mile to find counsel for you. Mark Heath is excellent.'

'The clerks, especially Sarah Jenking and Rob Leonard, are top tier. They go above and beyond to help.'

'Sarah Jenking is one of the most helpful clerks you can deal with. Nothing is too much trouble and she is almost always able to help, regardless of the short notice or the type of matter requiring assistance. Generally speaking, the clerks room at 3PB is efficient, helpful and extremely competent.'

'Sarah Jenking is particularly good. She is very quick in coming back to you with options of representation. On the whole, the Bournemouth clerks' room continues to provide a very good level of service.'

'Sarah Jenking is a particularly helpful and knowledgeable clerk.'

'Sarah Jenking is particularly helpful and always goes above and beyond to find the right counsel for your case.'

Regional Bar > Western Circuit > Family: divorce and financial remedy – Tier 2

At 3PB, the 'outstanding' family finance team has an excellent track record in handling a broad range of complex financial remedy matters. Group head **Hamish Dunlop** has 'a depth of knowledge and experience at his fingertips', and continues to act on financial remedy cases involving family farms and businesses. The 'methodical' **Esther Lieu** is well-versed in advising on TOLATA applications and Schedule 1 claims, as well as cases involving pre and post-nuptial agreements and overseas assets. **Mark Elliott** regularly represents clients in cohabitation disputes.

Testimonials

'Rob Leonard runs the ship as if there are 36 hours in the day.'

'Ian Charlton, Gemma Hyett, Rob Leonard and Philip Jones are exceptional.'

'Tom Cox and Jess Street are awesome.'

'Sarah Jenking is exceptional.'

'3PB has a great depth of knowledge.'

'Very accommodating and friendly set.'

'A strong set.'

'A great range of barristers.'

Regional Bar > South Eastern Circuit > Family: children and domestic abuse – Tier 3

3PB's family law team is 'particularly strong in relation to child arrangements matters' and it offers 'a wealth of talent in its members'. One such member is the 'experienced' **Nicola Martin**, whose practice encompasses the entirety of family law, from private children law proceedings covering abduction and parental alienation, and public law proceedings surrounding fatal and serious injuries inflicted on children. Head of the children's group **Emma Griffiths** is also experienced in both private and public law mandates, as well as Court of Protection cases. **Elaine Strachan** is another key name to note with expertise in national and international relocation cases and 'a fantastic ability to pick up on the intricate facts of a case quickly'. Additionally, **Sam Pentony** is sought after for his skill in representing parents in care proceedings, as he is 'a tenacious and persuasive advocate'.

Testimonials

'Patrick Steptoe is very helpful and accommodating.'

'The clerks have been very helpful and always gone above and beyond. Lewis Edwards is absolutely fantastic and always helpful.'

'Patrick Steptoe and Lewis Edwards have both been very helpful in booking counsel and assisting with the continuity of counsel, wherever possible.'

'David Sadler is always quick to respond to emails and very pleasant and helpful.'

'The clerks are very friendly, accommodating and organised. The clerks build excellent relationships with local solicitors, making us feel that they are a safe pair of hands.'

'All the clerks are very professional and easy to deal with.'

'Patrick Steptoe, Patrick Robson, Lewis Edwards, Dave Snook and Isabelle Lee in particular have been so helpful over recent years with my cases. They are all very down to earth, lovely to deal with and turn requests round really quickly. No request is too much for them and they are all very knowledgeable in their roles.'

'The clerks deserve particular mention, as they always go above and beyond to find appropriate counsel for a case and provide regular communication. They are always attentive to further communications requiring information being passed to counsel close to hearings and acknowledge the same so you can rest assured counsel has it.'