

4PB retains enviable position as the only Legal 500 tier 1 set in Children Law.

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The incomparable 4PB continue to dominate the Legal 500 in Children Law, with 40% of all leading silks ranked and 60% of all Juniors ranked tier 1.

An increasing number of Juniors are ranked in both Children Law and Family (including divorce and financial remedy).

The Legal 500 noted:

Children Law (including Public And Private Law) Tier 1

Seen as 'the leading set for child law in London and probably the country', 4 Paper Buildings 'is a hotbed of talent from the senior end to the most junior.' 'The availability and calibre of counsel from the very top to the more junior end of the set are excellent.' In the past year, its specialist family law practitioners have had several outings to the High Court, Court of Appeal, and two visits to the Supreme Court. Among the standout practitioners is Prof Jo Delahunty QC, who has been described as a 'trailblazer, a passionate advocate for the publicly-funded Bar'; she acted for six children through three guardians in four different cases involving allegations of extreme violent individual and group sexual abuse (AA & 25 Ors (Children) [2019] EWFC 64). Cleo Perry and Barbara Mills have further strengthened the impressive team following their elevation to silk, while Charlotte Baker is highlighted as a rising star.

Rising Star

Charlotte Baker 'Is simply fantastic; a very skilled advocate, immaculately prepared and totally client-focused.' Ranked: Tier 1

Leading Silks

Alex Verdan QC - 'Is most people's No. 1 silk for tricky private children cases. He is incredibly good with clients, super bright and also has amazing judgement.' Ranked: Tier 1

Jo Delahunty QC - 'Is as captivating on her feet as she is persuasive in negotiation. She is extraordinarily tenacious, kind and brave at work, and looks for all-encompassing and human solutions for children taking properly into account the wider implications in each family's dynamic.' Ranked: Tier 1

Teertha Gupta QC - 'Very able to cut through the relevant issues and to provide clear and decisive strategic input. Establishes a strong rapport with clients very quickly.' Ranked: Tier 1

Charles Hale QC - 'Is a superb advocate. He has a knack of understanding both the client and how best

to present their case.’ Ranked: Tier 1

Henry Setright QC – ‘Makes even the most complicated of cases seem effortless. His knowledge of the law is encyclopaedic. Judges always look to him on the most complicated legal points.’ Ranked: Tier 1

Alison Grief QC – ‘Has a work ethic which really is second to none. She has the ability to understand the psychology of a case which is critical to piece together the factual matrix in the complex medical/injury/abuse cases which she undertakes. She is also an excellent advocate.’ Ranked: Tier 2

Catherine Wood QC – ‘Incredibly accomplished advocate with a clear, persuasive and strong command of the courtroom.’ Ranked: Tier 2

Kate Branigan QC – ‘Is an exceptional barrister. She is always very well prepared with every page at her fingertips, and her meticulous advocacy is outstanding.’ Ranked: Tier 3

Christopher Hames QC – ‘Has a unique combination of fighting hard for his client, having a thoughtful and clever strategy and being extremely persuasive and beautifully articulate in court.’ Ranked: Tier 3

Sam King QC – ‘An excellent silk who is a pleasure to work with.’ Ranked: Tier 3

Cyrus Larizadeh QC – ‘A conjurer in court and simply wonderful to see in action. When he stands up to talk, people listen.’ Ranked: Tier 3

2020 Silks

Barbara Mills QC – ‘Unflappable, measured and incisive. Warm and naturally intuitive, she is liked and admired by opponents and Judges as well as her instructing solicitors and clients. A powerful court presence, and a smooth, clear and punchy advocate.’

Cleo Perry QC – ‘Is a persuasive and tenacious advocate and will be a great success in silk.’

Leading Juniors

Joy Brereton – 4 Paper Buildings ‘Incredibly user-friendly and accessible. She is also a powerful and persuasive presence in court on her client’s behalf.’ Ranked: Tier 1

Dorothea Gartland – ‘Is just cleverer than anyone else in the room – and yet there’s no pomposity. She is incisive and, whilst mastering detail, is able to stand back from it to see the essentials of a case.’ Ranked: Tier 1

Michael Gratton – ‘Has a formidable intellect and is one of the leading barristers in his field. He consistently delivers a strong performance and is respected by judges and opponents.’ Ranked: Tier 1

Justine Johnston – ‘Is an absolutely fantastic advocate. She reads her audience incredibly well and her arguments are always perfectly pitched. She is the person you want in your corner when the chips are down.’ Ranked: Tier 1

Judith Murray – ‘Is incredibly pragmatic and an excellent negotiator but at the same time has a real eye for detail.’ Ranked: Tier 1

Jacqueline Renton – ‘A top level specialist in international children’s cases and other private law children’s cases of great difficulty. As well as a truly encyclopaedic knowledge of child abduction and

other international children's work, in which she has long and comprehensive experience – she is a practitioner of exceptional quality.' Ranked: Tier 1

Sally Bradley – 'Has an unshakable calm, an insightful brain and excellent client management.' Ranked: Tier 2

Samantha Woodham – 'She is fantastic with clients and spots every relevant detail. She has huge amounts of energy for cases and does not shy away from taking or running a punchy point. She charms clients, solicitors and the court with her straightforward and respectful manner.' Ranked: Tier 2

Michael Edwards – 'Michael's calm and focused demeanour in court and his forensic cross-examination is a pleasure to watch.' Ranked: Tier 3

Rebecca Foulkes – 'Has a fantastic bedside manner with clients, is endlessly patient, and pragmatic. Sensible and super bright, she cuts down to the issues and offers sensible, sound advice.' Ranked: Tier 3

Mark Jarman – 'Possessed of a sharp and quick intellect and the ability to write and speak with incisive effectiveness. He is the ultimate class act, smooth, polished and authoritative and he is a devastatingly efficient cross-examiner.' Ranked: Tier 3

Brian Jubb – 'Displays excellent attention to detail.' Ranked: Tier 3

Andrew Powell – 'His knowledge of surrogacy law is second to none and he is a very personable and sensible advocate.' Ranked: Tier 3

Chris Barnes – 'A highly intelligent, knowledgeable barrister who is a skilled advocate.' Ranked: Tier 4

Francesca Dowse – 'An excellent advocate with a pragmatic, analytical and incisive approach. One of her many strengths is being able to put the client at ease before and during a hearing. Her cross border experience is extensive.' Ranked: Tier 4

Julia Townend – 'Scrupulously well-prepared. An articulate, persuasive and determined advocate.' Ranked: Tier 5

Ceri White – 'Has a manner that means even the most difficult or complex advice can be easily digested by clients. Ceri has a warm yet robust approach that clients appreciate and respect.' Ranked: Tier 5

Family (including divorce and financial remedy) Tier 2



4 Paper Buildings 'excels at offering consistent quality family law barristers at all levels.' The set is excellent at dealing with family disputes involving high-net-worth and international clients. It is an 'excellent set with first-rate practitioners who have a broad range of experience.' Charles Hale QC is a 'great QC who very unusually still does financial and children work' and recently acted in the Court of Appeal for the Intervener in Attorney General v Akhter and Others, an important case which could have significant consequences for marital rights and in particular Sharia divorce and nullity proceedings. Samantha Woodham rises to the top of this year's junior rankings, while Julia Townend and Harry Nosworthy are new entrants to the table.

Leading Silks

Charles Hale QC – ‘Is a phenomenal advocate and extremely persuasive. His other great skill is with lay clients. He puts them at their ease and is able to explain difficult legal concepts in a down to earth, friendly manner.’ Ranked: Tier 2

Christopher Hames QC – ‘Combines a very technical and forensic approach with a healthy dollop of pragmatism and a real sense of humanity. He is always impeccably prepared and miles ahead of the game.’ Ranked: Tier 4

Leading Juniors

Henry Clayton – ‘One of the the brightest, sharpest minds at the family law Bar. He regularly goes head to head with silks and does so with ease. He is a match for anyone and is simply superb.’ Ranked: Tier 1

Samantha Woodham – ‘Has huge amounts of energy for cases and does not shy away from taking or running a punchy point. She charms clients, solicitors and the court with her straightforward and respectful manner.’ Ranked: Tier 1

Judith Murray – ‘Is skilled in dealing with complex financial cases including trusts.’ Ranked: Tier 2

Francesca Dowse – ‘An excellent advocate with a pragmatic, analytical and incisive approach. One of her many strengths is being able to put the client at ease before and during a hearing. Her cross-border experience is extensive. Professional and personable, she is simply top-notch!’ Ranked: Tier 3

Nicholas Fairbank – ‘Is an intellectual powerhouse in a very measured exterior. In my view he is not as well-known as he should be, but that is changing as the large firms realise he offers an encyclopaedic brain and is the match for any silk.’ Ranked: Tier 3

Harry Gates – ‘Is absolutely charming with clients and wins them over straightaway, whilst also giving clear and honest advice. He is thoroughly well prepared and is an impressive advocate. His commitment to cases really shines through.’ Ranked: Tier 3

Rhiannon Lloyd – ‘Wins a case on paper – literally before she walks into the courtroom the judge is on her side because her paperwork is not only excellent but punchy and persuasive. Her position statements and written arguments are incredible. She is a very robust and highly skilled advocate.’ Ranked: Tier 4

Stephen Lyon – ‘Can mix it with senior barristers without being outgunned, whilst always maintaining a professional and calm demeanour.’ Ranked: Tier 4

Harry Nosworthy – ‘Whilst being firm and quick in court, Harry has a kind and calm approach with clients making them feel at ease while answering any questions.’ Ranked: Tier 4

Kate Van Rol – ‘Is an excellent advocate, who is strong and determined and always gives a compelling performance in court.’ Ranked: Tier 4

Julia Townend – ‘Is one of the most exciting legal talents at the Bar. She has a fierce legal intellect combined with incredibly effective advocacy skills that charm and persuade judges and clients alike. Julia sweeps aside opponents, and more often than not those who are many years her senior, with ease yet always with a calm and professional grace.’ Ranked: Tier 4

Katie Wood – ‘Very hardworking. Fantastic with clients and really goes the extra mile to achieve results. A real star.’ Ranked: Tier 4

Sophie Connors - 'Is a tenacious advocate. Her written work is meticulous. Clients love her empathy and her attention to detail - she knows their cases inside out. She is a terrific team player and incredibly user friendly.' Ranked: Tier 4