



Joanna Cross

1981-1984 – University of St. Andrews
1984 – B.Sc. (Medical Science)
1984-1987 – University of Manchester
1987 – M.B.Ch.B.
1990-1991 – City University, London
1991 – Diploma in Law
1991-1992 – Inns of Court School of Law

1992 – Called Lincoln's Inn

Legal Experience

I came to the Bar in Leeds as an independent practitioner in 1992 and completed a pupillage in 1993. I practice in all aspects of Family Law and act for the General Medical Council.

Areas of Practice:

Family Law

I am experienced in the management of Public and Private Law cases concerning children. I appear in Public and Private Law cases in the High Court, County Court and Family Proceedings Court. I represent parents and extended family members, local authorities, and children, through their Guardian and where they directly instruct the Solicitor. I act for the Official Solicitor in cases where there are issues of capacity to instruct.

I have experience in ancillary relief proceedings including section 37 proceedings and appeals and in contested divorce.

Public Law

I represent parties at all stages of care proceedings including:

- Emergency protection orders
- Applications for assessment
- Finding of fact hearings
- Applications to discharge
- Applications for secure accommodation
- Applications for placement and adoption

Private Law

I represent parties in dispute over all issues in private family law including:

- Residence and contact orders
- Parental responsibility orders
- Prohibited step orders
- Specific issue orders
- Leave to remove a child from jurisdiction, and
- Medical treatment orders

I act for those involved in domestic injunction applications and the enforcement of domestic injunctions by committal proceedings.

I represent parties involved in proceedings arising out of the abduction of a child including actions under the Hague Convention, the European Convention and actions for recovery of a child.

Ancillary Relief

I represent parties at First Appointment, Financial Dispute Resolution and Final Hearing. I advise in conference before offers of settlement, prepare written advice and act in applications involving third parties including those under S.37 Matrimonial Causes Act 1975.

Cases of Importance

Public Law:

- Infant injuries including shaking, attempted drowning, death of a child and injury resulting in significant disability
- Sexual abuse within the family and involving a paedophile ring
- Internet child pornography
- Parents with learning disabilities
- Parents with mental health issues
- Representation of grandparents
- Separate representation of older children in care proceedings
- Children giving evidence

Reported Cases

Re R (Care Order: Threshold Criteria) [2009] EWCA Civ 942; [2010] 1 FLR 673
H v. H (Jurisdiction to Grant Wardship) [2011] EWCA Civ 796 (at first instance)

Private Law:

- Severe and systematic domestic violence
- Cultural and racial issues including racism and forced marriage
- Representation of grandparents and other members of the extended family
- Abduction and removal from the jurisdiction
- Cases involving separate representation for the child

Ancillary Relief

- Conduct issues involving domestic violence and dishonesty
- S.37 applications where attempts have been made to dispose of matrimonial assets
- Proceeds of Crime
- Bankruptcy

Regulatory Work

I act for the General Medical Council in proceedings to regulate the practice of doctors pending investigation of their fitness to practice.

Previous Experience

Before coming to the Bar I was employed for 3 years as a junior doctor in General and Chest Medicine, Oncology and Obstetrics and Gynaecology. I then worked as a locum doctor for 2 years while I retrained in law.

I have found that experience in the medical profession is invaluable in assimilating medical information, drafting questions to a medical witness, and in questioning medical expert witnesses.

Additional Information

Member of Specialist Associations: Family Law Bar Association

Member of the local FLBA committee helping to organise teaching seminars
I speak regularly at events on family law organised by chambers

I speak to Sixth Formers about a career at the Bar on behalf of the Bar Council.