



Valerie Sterling

LLB (Hons), University of Manchester

Year of Call: 1981 – Gray's Inn

Area of Practice:

Family:

- Children
- Money

Valerie Sterling was called to the Bar in 1981 and is a family law practitioner specialising in children and money cases. She has a busy public law practice encompassing all aspects of care work, especially adoption, and she frequently acts on behalf of parents in contested finding of fact hearings.

Valerie is recommended as being 'excellent in children's cases' in the 2010 edition of 'The Legal 500'. She has extensive experience of acting in fact-finding hearings in public and private law concerning non-accidental injury, domestic violence and all aspects of child abuse.

Valerie's money practice includes high-value cases concerning family businesses, farmland and professional practitioners in the world of law, academia, medicine and sport.

She has recent experience of a contested ancillary relief case involving a foreign pre-nuptial agreement and its relation to the 2009 Court of Appeal case of Radmacher.

Recent cases of importance include

- Re H Court of Appeal Thorpe and Elias LJJ and Coleridge LJ [2009] (care and adoption case);
- Re H Court of Appeal Thorpe, Thomas and Wall LJJ [2007] 2 FLR 317, (in which Valerie acted on behalf of a father who successfully resisted an American mother's application to re-locate to the US with the British-born child of the relationship);

- Re K (non-accidental injuries, perpetrator, new evidence) [2005] 1 FLR 285 Court of Appeal Wall and Neuberger LJJ. Successful re-opening of care case after fact-finding hearing and disposal hearings - mother appealed against care orders and freeing orders, requesting that the court take into consideration her fresh evidence.

Articles in 'Family Law': 'DNA, Paternity Deceit and Reliability of the Birth Certificate as a Historical Document', August 2009; 'More contact for Breast-feeding mothers', April 2005.

Care Work:

Valerie has a great deal of experience in complicated and sensitive child care cases involving serious child abuse particularly in which there is a range of medical expert evidence. She has experience of being led in the High Court in a two week case involving non accidental head injury to a five day old baby.

She also has particular expertise and understanding of cases involving a religious and cultural dimension; and cases in which clients are assisted by an interpreter.

Valerie also has an appreciation of cases involving mental health issues and has acted on behalf of the Official Solicitor.