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Catherine Heyworth

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Practice Overview

The majority of Catherine's work now spanning across a 25 year period involves significant complex cases and high net worth financial dispute cases. Catherine is frequently enlisted against leading counsel thanks to her substantial experience.

Catherine is usually instructed by local authorities in order to conduct complex and demanding public law cases dealing almost exclusively with sexual abuse, physical abuse, infant/child death and severe neglect. Whilst undertaking a substantial amount of local authority work she is also instructed by parents and guardians.

Catherine also undertakes ancillary relief work which includes complex cases involving high net worth disputes, businesses and farming cases.

Catherine also undertakes cases in SEN tribunals for Local Education Authorities.

Notable and Reported cases

- Re W [2001] 1 FCR 139.
  - Threshold criteria - necessity for hearing on allegations of inappropriate sexual behaviour between mother and child during contact;
- Re S [1996] 2 FLR 773.
  - Early hearings in contested care cases to identify issues and encourage agreement between experts, to avoid delay.
- Other

  During the course of the last five years, Catherine has undertaken very challenging work which has included:

  - Acting in care proceedings on behalf of local authorities where allegations of sexual abuse have been made against foster carers.
  - Non accidental injury cases where historical injuries have had to be considered, which had previously been thought to be of accidental origin.

- Care cases involving the revisiting of historical child deaths within a family.
- Care cases dealing with drug poisoning of children.
- Care cases in the High Court where media access has been permitted.
- Catherine has acted for Health Boards dealing with disputed treatment issues involving children.
- Care cases dealing with international sex abuse of children.
- Care cases involving severe head injuries to children resulting in death or significant disability.
- Care cases dealing with interfamilial and step parents sexual abuse including rape.

Recommendations

- Highlighted by sources for her depth of experience in complex injury cases, Catherine Heyworth undertakes a range of care work including serious physical and sexual abuse matters. She has notable expertise in cases involving complicated head injuries.Strengths: "I have always been impressed with her ability to empathise with the clients and her knowledge of areas outside the legal remit, such as medical knowledge." (Chambers UK 2017)
- 'An incredibly accomplished advocate.' Legal 500 2016
- 'Highly experienced senior junior with a broad-based practice. She undertakes financial relief cases involving high-value assets and represents clients in care proceedings involving serious neglect and abuse.' "She keeps clients calm and gives them confidence." "She is very able at communicating with the client and making sure that the young person understands and is able to get their views across." (Chambers UK 2016)
- 'Her workload includes cases involving serious injuries to children and child fatalities' (Legal 500, 2015)
- 'Commended for her work in serious care cases, she is proficient within both children law and financial dispute resolution. She is adept in children's proceedings that involve the most serious allegations of neglect, physical and sexual abuse, and infanticide. She is frequently instructed by local authorities on such cases, but also represents parents, guardians and interveners.' (Chambers UK 2015)
- "Experienced in complex care cases and high-net-worth financial disputes" (Legal 500, 2014)
- "Her preparation and advocacy skills are excellent." "She is highly able and meticulous in her preparation." (Chambers UK 2014)

Appointments

- Pupil Supervisor

Education & Qualification

- LL.B (Hons)

Memberships

- Family Law Bar Association