

WESTGATE CHAMBERS



Maria Hancock

A senior junior and experienced leading junior, who regularly appears alongside Queens Counsel.

She undertakes the most serious of Children and Family law work predominantly focussing on complex medical issues in NAI allegations, FII cases, serious physical, sexual and emotional harm and neglect. Recent and current examples include: two separate sets of High Court proceedings involving the death of babies from asphyxiation (representing F in the first and M in the second, with Maria successfully persuading the Courts that her clients were not involved in the deaths), the gravest of child sexual abuse including anal rape (F), serious and life limiting head injuries to a baby (F) and multi-faceted illnesses and medical conditions fabricated and induced in a child (M). Others include intra-familial sexual abuse (representing the children), serious physical abuse including punishment by fire and heat (M), FGM proceedings (M) and NAI proceedings involving multiple fractures to children.

Maria also has an expertise and recent experience of international relocation cases, international child abduction proceedings, including applications pursuant to Art 11(7) Brussels II A, matters which have difficult jurisdictional issues and cases involving children with gender dysphoria. She is also experienced in Judicial Review and HRA applications arising out of Children Act proceedings.

Maria quickly inspires confidence in professional and lay clients with her thorough knowledge of relevant law and procedure, excellent oral and written advocacy and calm but authoritative manner. At the same time as being an effective advocate, Maria is extremely approachable.

Maria is also a trained Children Arbitrator. Her skills as an advocate are utilised to bring proceedings to an efficient conclusion, without parties having to deal with the large backlog the Court service are presently dealing with.

Called 1995
Deputy Head of Chambers (Family)

Practice Areas

- Family
- Public Access
- Child Arbitration

Qualifications, Associations

- FLBA (Former Kent and Sussex Committee member, including Chair -3 terms)
- Children Arbitrator. CI Arb member
- Chambers Trust Committee member
- Pupil Supervisor
- Certificate of Qualification in Social Work, BA (Hons) OU

Westgate Chambers

9 Pavilion Parade,
Brighton
East Sussex
BN2 1RA

Tel: 01273 480510

DX 2732 Brighton
mh@westgate-chambers.co.uk