

## Vanessa Wells

Call 2017 | Admitted as a Solicitor: 2010

Telephone [020 7831 0222](tel:02078310222)

Email [vanessa.wells@42br.com](mailto:vanessa.wells@42br.com)



Vanessa is a busy family practitioner who specialises in children work, with a particular focus on public law care proceedings and adoption matters. Vanessa accepts instructions from all parties in care proceedings.

Vanessa has broad experience across all areas of child protection both in the involvement of the state in the family and arising out of family breakdown.

Vanessa's experience, determination and her dedication to representing her client provides her with the ability to provide robust advice, forensic examination of any case and strong advocacy skills thus ensuring the best outcome achievable for her client.

## Family Law

Vanessa joined the bar in 2017 after a successful practice as a solicitor in two firms in East Kent since 2010. Vanessa's experience in children law was recognised by the Law Society in accrediting her as a Child panel member in June 2013.

In public law, Vanessa has experience in representing clients with cases involving: -

- Domestic abuse, both for perpetrator and victim
  - Non accidental injuries including fractures, brain injury, bruising, sexual injuries and burns
  - Sexual abuse cases including intergenerational sexual abuse
  - Neglect
  - FII
  - Substance abuse including the cross examination of forensic test results
  - Emotional abuse
  - Intractable contact disputes where alienation is alleged
  - Neurodiversity and additional learning needs
  - Physical disability in both children and adults.
- Vanessa undertakes work for local authorities, parents, children, family members and intervenors.

Vanessa has a particular interest in assisting vulnerable clients, either as a result of domestic violence, their own childhood

abuse or neurodivergence.

Vanessa also has extensive experience in representing parents in private law disputes pertaining to: -

- alienating behaviours
- protracted disputes
- domestic abuse
- enforcement of orders including committal
- refusal of children to have contact
- cases where a 16.4 guardian is appointed
- fact finding hearings

#### Recent Cases:

**Re D [case concluded 2025** - at appeal stage presently] – representation of children in private law proceedings with fact finding element through rule 16.4 guardian. Judge made findings of harm but did not set out reasoning. Appeal pending.

**Re B [concluded 2025]** – representation of the children in care proceedings concerning allegations of factitious and induced illness in respect of 3 adopted children. Findings of harm made. Children remained in the family with support. Led by Jeremy Hall.

**Re S [concluded 2025]** – Representation of a mother in care proceedings with allegations of non-accidental burns and unlawful disclosure of papers to police. Children returned at end of case. Led by Penny Howe KC at fact-finding.

**Re W [ongoing 2024]** – representing the father in a fact-finding hearing in private law proceedings. There had been long standing proceedings as the mother had unilaterally ceased contact. The mother persistently ignored court orders and a number of applications for enforcement were made. The mother alleged serious domestic abuse. At the fact-finding hearing, the Judge found the mother's allegations to be untrue and that she had misled professionals. She had withdrawn a number of allegations in cross-examination. The Judge found her to have poor litigation conduct and ordered her to do an unpaid work requirement. The case continues at welfare stage.

**Re B [concluded 2024]** – Representation of a mother in care proceedings with allegations of grooming. Child returned home to parents. Led by Gemma Farrington KC at fact-finding.

**Re F [2023]** – representing the local authority at an interim hearing in the High Court on a complex matter. Legal issue pertained to the use of s38(6) to assess the situation where the children had migrated home under care orders and mother would not allow access for a child and family assessment. Leading a second junior.

**L v G [concluded 2023]** – Representing the appellant mother at an appeal in the High Court. The Judge had set out his decision in full in the Judgment but attached the father's version of the order and would not respond to clarification in this respect. Permission to appeal, permission to appeal out of time and the substantial appeal were granted. The appeal Judge made plain the order which purported to contain the Judgment and the Judgment were at odds with each other and remitted for re-hearing.

#### Reported cases: -

**A & Ors (care proceedings; inherent jurisdiction: order for return to Austria) [2024] EWFC178**

**KCC v D & Ors (5) (Re-hearing) [2015] EWFC 96**

## Qualifications

- LLB (Hons) University of Kent 2007
- Postgraduate Diploma in Legal Practice College of Law 2009

## Scholarships and Awards

- 2014: Shortlisted for the Kent Law Society awards in the category of Junior Lawyer

## Memberships and Committees

- Association of Lawyers for Children Member
- FLBA Member

---

## Quotations:

- *“Vanessa is a credit to family law”*

Client A

- *“Vanessa is my go-to barrister, she is extremely organised and meticulous with her preparation. Vanessa has the ability to deliver robust advice in a kind and considered manner which clients respond well to. Her advocacy skills are extremely strong and she always goes the extra mile to achieve the best outcome for her clients.”*

Louise Carberry, Solicitor