



# Elizabeth McGrath KC

**Head of Chambers**

**Year of Call:** 1987

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## Overview

Elizabeth McGrath KC (Liz) was called to the bar in 1987 and for over 20 years has practiced exclusively in the field of family law. Liz was appointed Queen's Counsel in 2014.

Liz appears regularly in complex high net worth financial remedy cases and has particular expertise in dealing with cases involving private limited companies, partnerships and extensive property and pension portfolios. Liz is often instructed in cases in which there are parallel private law children issues with particular emphasis on 'residence', 'contact', relocation, LGBT parenting and surrogacy.

Liz has extensive expertise in public law, acting for Local Authorities, parents and children in the High Court and the Court of Appeal. She has been instructed in a number of complex fact finding hearings involving allegations of sexual abuse and non-accidental injuries, and has appeared in a number of reported cases.

Liz's vast experience across the field of private and public family law, and her down to earth, approachable manner, is known to inspire confidence in her instructing solicitors and enables her to establish a productive and easy rapport with lay clients. Her thorough approach to preparation means that she is quick to identify the crucial issues in complex cases.

Whilst Liz gives firm and fair advice with an eye to early resolution where possible, if proceedings require a judicial decision she has a reputation for concise, robust and effective advocacy.

## Recommendations

Elizabeth McGrath KC is an expert family law practitioner with a broad range of experience in children work. She regularly handles cases of neglect as well as serious injury and sexual abuse.

Strengths: "Elizabeth instils an immediate sense of trust and confidence in her clients."

**Chambers UK 2025/Family/Children/Midlands Bar/Band 1**

She also takes on complex financial remedy cases concerning high net worth individuals. She is sought out for her experience in cases with valuation issues.

Strengths: "Excellent advocacy and bedside manner with clients. A force to be reckoned with."

**Chambers UK 2024/Family/Children/Midlands Bar/Band 1**

Strengths: "Elizabeth makes her mark in care proceedings."

"Ms McGrath is a tenacious and confident advocate."

"She has an understanding and sensitive bedside manner with extensive knowledge."

"Elizabeth is an absolutely outstanding KC."

**Chambers UK 2023**/Family/Matrimonial Finance/Midlands Bar/Band 1

**Chambers UK 2023**/Family/Children/Midlands Bar

Strengths: "She is a force to be reckoned with. Her preparation is second to none." "She really gets to the bottom of matters quickly and is supportive but firm with clients and their families."

**Chambers UK 2022**/Family/Matrimonial Finance/Midlands Bar

**Chambers UK 2022**/Family/Children/Midlands Bar

Strengths: "She has a wealth of experience and her advocacy skills are to be admired." "A very safe pair of hands. Procedurally good and always extremely well prepared. She goes the extra mile to make her clients feel comfortable in what are often very difficult circumstances."

**Chambers UK 2021**/Family/Matrimonial Finance/Midlands Bar

**Chambers UK 2021**/Family/Children/Midlands Bar

Strengths: "Her diligence, thoroughness and empathy for the client stand out."

**Chambers UK 2020**/Family/Matrimonial/Midlands Bar

"A heavyweight in family proceedings and a very popular advocate in the Birmingham community." "She is a great advocate and has client care skills."

**Chambers UK 2019**/Family/Matrimonial/Midlands Bar

Strengths: "A heavyweight in family proceedings, recently taken silk and a very popular advocate in the Birmingham community." "She is a strong practitioner with integrity."

**Chambers UK 2018**/Family/Matrimonial/Midlands Bar

Strengths: "An excellent silk. Her client care skills are second to none and she is robust in the face of difficult opponents." "A brilliant tactician and outstanding negotiator."

**Chambers UK 2017**/Family/Matrimonial/Midlands Bar

'Continues to grow an admirable practice in all areas of family law. Covers both public and private children law such as death of children, and also holds expertise in ancillary relief, high net worth business assets and pensions.

Strengths: "She is a fantastic barrister and is great to deal with. She provides excellent technical support and is great with the lay client; really human and down to earth."

"A heavyweight in family proceedings and a very popular advocate in the Birmingham community."

**Chambers UK 2016**/Family/Matrimonial/Midlands Bar

'A great legal brain.'

'If there's a fight to be had she won't back away but if there's a deal to be done she'll get it done.'

**Chambers UK 2015**/Family/Matrimonial/Midlands Bar

'Where there is a need for litigation Elizabeth is a fearless advocate, and a very skilled one at that.'

**Chambers UK 2014**/ Family/Matrimonial/v

'Outside the court room Elizabeth is a calming figure for parents in what can be very upsetting proceedings. She has an empathetic approach but maintains an ability to give robust advice. Her preparation of cases is rigorous and her ability to spot minute details is unparalleled. Her cross-examination and submissions are skillful, forensic and precise.'

**Legal 500 2025**/Family: Children and Domestic Violence/Leading Silks/Midlands Circuit – Tier 1

**Legal 500 2025**/Divorce and Financial Remedy/Leading silks/Midlands Circuit - Tier 1

Elizabeth McGrath KC is a 'fearless advocate' who handles public law cases, including ones with international elements. 'Elizabeth is a tenacious and confident advocate. Her attention to detail is meticulous.'

**Legal 500 2024**/Family: Children and Domestic Violence/Leading Silks/Midlands Circuit - Tier 1

**Legal 500 2024**/Divorce and Financial Remedy/Leading silks/Midlands Circuit - Tier 1

'Elizabeth is robust and empathetic. She reads the client well and tailors how she delivers her advice and guides them through the process accordingly.'

**Legal 500 2023**/Divorce and Financial Remedy/Leading silks/Midlands Circuit - Tier 1

3PB 'Elizabeth is tenacious and thorough in her preparation, with a canny ability to think outside the box.'

Elizabeth McGrath KC has more than three decades' experience in family law and is 'an exceptional cross-examiner'.

**Legal 500 2023**/Child Law (public and private)/Leading Silks/Midlands Circuit - Tier 1

'Elizabeth is able to make clients feel at ease and understood. Clients really feel that their case has been fought.'

**Legal 500 2022**/Child Law (public and private)/Leading Silks/Midlands Circuit

**Legal 500 2022**/Divorce and Financial Remedy/Leading Silks/Midlands Circuit

'She is extremely good at getting to the heart of the matter and connecting with the client.'

**Legal 500 2021**/Child Law (Public and Private)/Leading Silks

**Legal 500 2021**/Divorce and Financial Remedy/Leading Silks

'An exceptionally knowledgeable silk at the forefront of financial remedy in the region.'

**Legal 500 2020**/Family and Children/Leading Silks

'Very well known for her expertise in financial remedy cases.'

**Legal 500 2018/19**/Family and Children/Leading Silks

'Highly experienced in financial remedy proceedings.'

**Legal 500 2017**/Family and children, Leading Silk

## Professional bodies

- Association of Lawyers for Children
- Family Law Association
- British Agencies for Adoption and Fostering

# Expertise

## Family

Liz was called to the bar in 1987 and for over 20 years has practiced exclusively in the field of family law. She appears frequently in complex and sensitive cases involving children (public and private) as well as cases within the financial remedies remit, dealing with issues involving substantial assets and often where the Court is faced with complex factual and expert evidence.

Liz has a proven ability to deal with high conflict issues in a calm and professional manner whilst devoting significant energy to her client's case.

Liz is available for work internationally on all family law matters.

### Reported Cases

- P and E (Care Proceedings: Whether to Hold Fact-Finding Hearing), Re [2024] EWCA Civ 403
- The Mother & Anor v Shropshire Council & Anor [2024] EWHC 344 (Fam)
- A Local Authority -v- MM, NM, MC, CM and W, X, Y and Z (Children acting through their Guardian) [2020] EWFC 65
- Re ABC (Children: Overlaying Child) [2020] EWFC [57]
- B-T (A Child: Threshold Conditions) [2020] EWCA Civ 697
- RE AA (Children) & 25 Ors [2019] EWFC 64
- E (A Child) (Family Proceedings: Evidence), Re [2016] EWCA Civ 473; [2016] 4 W.L.R. 105
- Stockport MBC v AM [2016] EWFC 12
- A CC v AB [2015] EWFC 82
- W (Children) (Adoption: Procedure: Conditions), Re [2015] EWCA Civ 403; [2016] 1 F.L.R. 454; [2015] 3 F.C.R. 99; [2015] Fam. Law 765
- Coventry City Council v B [2012] EWHC 4014 (Fam); [2015] 1 F.L.R. 411; [2014] Fam. Law 954
- E (A Child) (Wardship Order: Child in Voluntary Accommodation), Re [2012] EWCA Civ 1773; [2013] 2 F.L.R. 63; [2013] Fam. Law 399
- K (A Child) (Post Adoption Placement Breakdown), Re [2012] EWHC 4148 (Fam); [2013] 1 F.L.R. 1; [2012] Fam. Law 1450
- Coventry City Council v O [2011] EWCA Civ 729; [2012] Fam. 210; [2012] 3 W.L.R. 208; [2012] P.T.S.R. 835; [2011] 2 F.L.R. 936; [2011] 3 F.C.R. 38; [2012] B.L.G.R. 279; [2011]
- Fam. Law 921; (2011) 108(27) L.S.G. 23; (2011) 161 N.L.J. 952; Times, July 1, 2011; Official Transcript
- J (A Child) (Care Proceedings: Injuries), Re [2009] EWHC 1383 (Fam); [2009] 2 F.L.R. 99; [2009] Fam. Law 479

## Private law

### Private Law Children and Domestic Abuse

Liz acts for parents and guardians (where appointed) in residence and contact cases of great sensitivity and often where the evidence of expert psychologists or psychiatrists aids the courts determination on welfare issues. She is a fierce advocate in cases involving allegations of sexual abuse and parental alienation. Her vast experience in this field extends to cases involving an international element where clients need to be given comprehensive advice on an urgent basis.

Liz has represented clients from a range of backgrounds, including those with learning difficulties, and her experience and maturity enable her to establish a rapport with the client to achieve the best outcome possible.

## Care and adoption

### Public Law Care and Adoption

Liz acts for Local Authorities, parents, guardians and grandparents/other interested parties, in cases involving serious non accidental injury, sexual abuse, chronic neglect, death of the child and fabricated and induced illness (FII).

Liz is experienced in complex public law cases under the children and adoption legislation, in particular those involving complex medical issues; cases where placement of children outside the jurisdiction is proposed; cases where confidentiality and disclosure are an issue, including restraint of publication by the media and cases involving the use of the inherent jurisdiction of the High Court.

## Finance

Liz acts for wives, husbands and intervenors in cases involving substantial assets and often where the Court is faced with complex factual and expert evidence. In recent years she has specialised in cases involving businesses where the Court has been required to consider forensic accounting evidence in order to value shareholdings and to assess liquidity. She has acted in a number of cases involving minority shareholdings where the issue of quasi partnership has arisen and where contribution arguments have featured. Liz has extensive experience of cases involving significant pension assets where the issue of pension sharing /offset has been the subject of expert actuarial evidence.

Her breadth of experience in the field of family finance enables her to give forthright views as to likely outcomes at an early stage in proceedings and in that way to ensure that financial dispute resolutions are as effective as they can be.

Liz believes that her expertise in private law children cases can be of significant benefit to those clients facing marital breakdown who need swift advice and able representation on both money and the arrangements for their children, who would prefer to obtain it from one source.

## FDR Hearing Service

Liz is available for private remote FDR hearings. For more information on private remote FDR hearings please click [here](#).