



SUSANNAH JOHNSON

Year of call
1996

Susannah Johnson is a family and civil practitioner with a particular emphasis on child law, an area in which she has been in practice since qualifying.

Her civil work focuses on personal injury and the effects of historical and recent sexual and physical abuse, an area she has been working in as a senior junior since 2009. Susannah also practised in criminal law for over 10 years.

As well as being noted for her advocacy skills, Susannah is known for her sound judgment and for her sensitive approach to vulnerable clients.

Susannah is based in London and has been in practice at 7BR since 1997.

Susannah is qualified to accept instructions directly from clients and is registered under the Bar Council's Public Access Scheme, meaning that members of the public who seek specialist advice can come direct to her. In addition, she welcomes instructions from solicitors, in-house law departments, qualified foreign lawyers, and clients licensed by the Bar Council to give instructions direct to barristers under the Bar Council's Licensed Access Scheme. For more information please visit our Direct Access page [here](#).

LEGAL EXPERTISE

Family Law

Susannah is a highly experienced advocate who regularly appears in the High Court in complex public and private law cases. She acts for parents, guardians and local authorities and acts for parents in international child abduction cases. Susannah also has experience in forced marriage and Court of Protection cases. She has attracted positive comment on her advocacy skills from both clients and the judiciary.

Susannah is a contributor to Family Law Journal and to chambers run seminars and events, giving talks on areas of topical interest.

Selected Cases

[Gloucestershire CC v F \(2019\)](#)

Instructed by the local authority in a case involving multiple fractures to a very young baby with a rare genetic condition and complex causation issues.

[London Borough of Enfield v K & S \(2019\)](#)

Representation of a father in care proceedings concerning allegations of life threatening non-accidental injury to a child and domestic violence.

[London Borough of Enfield v A \(2018\)](#)

Representation of a child in the High Court in care and inherent jurisdiction proceedings concerning parental refusal to allow blood transfusion.

[M v L \(2017\)](#)

Representation of a child in private law High Court proceedings concerning international child abduction, conflict of jurisdiction and residence.

[London Borough of Enfield v T \(2016\)](#)

Representation of a parent in Care proceedings involving allegations of physical and psychological abuse and proposal for international special guardianship arrangement.

[London Borough of Islington v G & D \(2014\)](#)

Representation of parent in care proceedings involving proposal for international adoption of subject child.

[London Borough of Newham v J \(2013\)](#)

Representation of parent in care proceedings involving international trafficking and sexual exploitation.

[Hertfordshire County Council v G \(2012\)](#)

Representation of parent with learning difficulties concerning allegations of serious non-accidental injury and neglect.

[London Borough of Tower Hamlets v M \(2010\)](#)

High Court wardship proceedings. Representation of child after attempted murder of baby by parent.

Personal Injury

Susannah specialises in claimant personal injury work based on historical and recent sexual and physical abuse in institutional settings such as schools, places of detention and care homes and in the context of the care system. Susannah has also been instructed on behalf of defendants where her knowledge of the family jurisdiction and practice was required.

Susannah is frequently instructed on behalf of individuals who have suffered abuse as children at the hands of carers and teachers; and claimants in group actions based on negligence and vicarious liability against the Ministry of Justice, local authorities, organs of the Catholic Church and other religious organisations in relation to institutions including:

- Medomsley Detention Centre; and
- St William's Children's Home

Susannah set up and is head of the Claimant Child Abuse group at 7BR. As a highly experienced former criminal practitioner and specialised rape prosecutor Susannah is used to dealing with the difficulties often encountered in sexual abuse cases and in advising on matters of disclosure, public interest immunity and privilege.

Susannah is regarded as a highly skilled advocate with a sensitive approach to cases and as someone that clients find open and easy to talk to about difficult and distressing matters.

Selected Cases

[Various v The Catholic Child Welfare Society \(Diocese of Middlesbrough\) \(1\) & The Trustees of the Middlesbrough Diocesan Rescue Society \(2\) \(St William's litigation\) \(2009-2018\)](#)

Group action involving widespread historical, sexual and physical abuse.

[Various v The Ministry of Justice \(2009, 2012, 2014\)](#)

Serious sexual and physical abuse of young men held at Medomsley Detention Centre, County Durham. Multiple cases settled in claimants' favour. The abuse is currently the subject of an investigation by Durham Police.

[P v A County Council \(2014\)](#)

Historical allegations of physical and sexual abuse and unlawful administration of medication by psychiatrist in a children's home; negligence and vicarious liability alleged against local authority. Claim settled in Claimant's favour.

E v Birmingham City Council (2013)

Allegations of historic sexual and physical abuse and negligence by the local authority settled in favour of Claimant.

P v A City Council (2013)

Recent allegations of sexual abuse by a teacher for which employers were vicariously liable and negligence by local authority in failing to carry out proper statutory checks. Claim settled in Claimant's favour.

Court of Protection

Susannah is a child law and civil practitioner who has extensive experience in representing and advising in cases concerning vulnerable and mentally unwell adults and children in family and civil proceedings. This includes Court of Protection work concerning issues of sexual exploitation, physical and sexual abuse, capacity to consent to marriage, mental illness and negligence on the part of institutions and local authorities.

Memberships

- Association of Child Abuse Lawyers
- Family Law Bar Association
- Personal Injury Bar Association