



## Niamh Ross

Email: [clerk@stjohnsbuildings.co.uk](mailto:clerk@stjohnsbuildings.co.uk)

Phone: 0161 214 1500

Year of Call: 2016

Niamh accepted tenancy at St John's Buildings in November 2017 following the successful completion of her pupillage. Niamh practises in all areas of children law, with a particular interest in public law proceedings.

Having been granted the Gray's Inn William Shaw QC Award, Niamh achieved an "Outstanding" grade in the BPTC and was called to the Bar in 2016. Prior to this, Niamh graduated with an LLB in Law with First Class Honours from the London School of Economics and Political Science in 2015. Alongside her studies, Niamh acted as a volunteer supporter for Victim Support in Newham, specialising in supporting victims of domestic abuse.

## EXPERTISE

### Family - Children

### Public Law

Niamh regularly represents local authorities, parents, children and interveners at all stages of public law proceedings. Niamh is frequently instructed to draft written documents including threshold documents, case summaries, and skeleton arguments, and is happy to advise in conference where appropriate. Niamh has experience in public law proceedings involving complex issues including non-accidental injuries to children, serious emotional harm and significant neglect. Niamh has represented parents with learning disabilities, mental health issues and/or substance misuse issues. Niamh's recent cases have included the following:

#### **Salford CC v W others (Religion and Declaration of Looked After Status)[2021] EWHC 61 (Fam)**

Led by Lorraine Cavanagh QC in this application for a prohibited steps order to prevent the

prospective special guardians from allowing the children to receive the sacraments of the Roman Catholic faith until they were 16 years old. The judgment is available [here](#).

**A Local Authority v I (2018):** Following several days of evidence, including cross-examination of an expert psychologist, successfully opposed a local authority's application for the parents to be 'ruled out' prior to the final hearing, ultimately securing the return of the child to the parents' care some months later.

**A Local Authority v B (2018):** Acted as second junior counsel for a local authority, securing findings that a mother had caused serious injuries to a young child, including injuries caused by shaking, despite the evidence of several medical experts being challenged.

**A Local Authority v M (2018):** Represented a local authority in care proceedings which arose out of protracted private law proceedings. Successfully secured a finding that the mother had caused the child emotional harm as a consequence of negatively influencing their views about the paternal family. A care order was made with a plan for the child to move from the care of their mother, who had been their primary carer, to be placed with their father.

## Private Law

In private law matters, Niamh has acted for parents and for Children's Guardians appointed under Rule 16.4 at every stage of proceedings. She has a particular interest in cases involving allegations of domestic abuse and has experience representing vulnerable clients. Niamh has acted for parties alleging and/or disputing allegations of a serious nature, including allegations of physical and sexual abuse of children, and of domestic abuse of all forms. Niamh has experience in cases involving intractable contact disputes and the enforcement of child arrangements orders. As well as cases concerning the arrangements for children to live with and spend time with their parents and family members, Niamh has dealt with cases involving issues such as changes of name, internal relocation and removal of children from the jurisdiction.