



CASE STUDIES

Niamh Ross Pupil 2016, Tenant 2017



I joined St John's Buildings as a pupil in November 2016, specialising in family and criminal law. I had two hugely supportive and welcoming pupil supervisors, each highly experienced and well-respected in their respective practice areas.

From my perspective, the following were some of the standout aspects of pupillage at St John's Buildings:

Expertise

One of the key benefits of being part of a large, multidisciplinary set is the breadth of skill and expertise in Chambers. In first six, I spent time shadowing a number of practitioners across different practice areas and of varying levels of seniority. This allowed me to establish my own strengths and interests, and ensured that I had a well-rounded understanding of the legal system before I started on my feet. Whilst I have since chosen to practise exclusively in family law, having the opportunity to hone my advocacy skills at an early stage by conducting criminal trials in the Magistrates' Court in second six was invaluable. As a junior member of the family team, I continue to develop my skills and knowledge with the benefit of support and guidance from some of the very best family practitioners in the country here in Chambers.

Support

From the first days of first six, through to the most challenging days of my practice so far, I have always felt well-supported in Chambers. My pupil supervisors and many other members of Chambers were very encouraging and approachable, and were always happy to discuss cases with me or to provide moral

support after a challenging day. I was also included in social events by my colleagues at the junior end of Chambers as soon as I started pupillage. St John's Buildings has an excellent, supportive clerking team. During second six, my diary was managed carefully to achieve a challenging but manageable balance of work. I had regular reviews with my senior clerks who ensured that my practice was progressing appropriately.

Technology

The software available in Chambers has allowed me to work effectively on an almost entirely paperless basis from the first days on my feet, which has not only been very convenient, but has allowed me to stay ahead of the curve as the Courts continue to move towards paperless working. Throughout pupillage and beyond, I have benefitted from the wealth of technological expertise which the clerks and other barristers have gained and shared, which has helped me to develop my approach to the preparation of cases electronically.

Overall, whilst pupillage was a very challenging year with many steep learning curves, I feel that pupillage at St John's Buildings provided me with a strong foundation for a successful and rewarding career at the Bar. Since accepting tenancy, my practice has continued to develop well and I am confident that it will continue to do so at St John's Buildings.