



Welcome to
GT Stewart Solicitors & Advocates



Family and
Childcare
Department

OUR DEPARTMENT

We have a large department made up of a number of specialist fee earners who are ably supported by a combination of our expert administrators, secretaries, paralegals and caseworkers; all representing clients based nationwide in the following teams:

- 📍 **East Dulwich Team** (South London)
- 📍 **Eskinazi Team** (North London)
- 📍 **FMW Team** (West London)
- 📍 **Hudgell Team** (East London)
- 📍 **Kent Team**
- 📍 **Leeds Team**
- 📍 **McGrath Team** (Birmingham)
- 📍 **Silks Team** (Oldbury, Black Country)



In addition to our teams being based in the above locations, we have access to all of our other offices nationwide and regularly see clients there too, or remotely when required. We offer a service to clients both in the UK and abroad in a variety of types of family cases.



Please meet - Ryan Booth
Joint Head of the Family & Childcare Department



Ryan is a highly experienced and well-respected Child Protection Solicitor and is an Accredited Member of the Law Society's Children's Panel. He has over 15 years of experience in Family Law including representation of Children through their Children's Guardian, Parents and Family members. His expertise extends to advising parties on behalf of the Official Solicitor.

He represents clients nationally in the UK and worldwide specialising in complex child protection care proceedings and has experience of a variety of cases including sexual abuse, child trafficking, paedophile rings, shaken baby and non-accidental injuries. Ryan is renowned for his fierce representation of clients by Judges and colleagues alike, and conducts almost all his own advocacy. Ryan is Ranked in the Legal 500.

Please meet - Max Konarek
Joint Head of the Family & Childcare Department



Max is a specialist Child Protection Solicitor and is accredited on the Law Society's Children Panel. He represents clients based in the UK and Worldwide. Max's experience extends over 16 years and now he specialises in the most complex cases in Family and Childcare Law that include the death of a child, shaken baby allegations, non-accidental injuries, sexual abuse, Fabricated or Induced Illness (FII). He represents clients in all levels of Court [Magistrates Court | County Court | High Court | Court of Appeal | Supreme Court].

Max has a particular interest in representing clients that are neurodiverse, vulnerable adults with learning difficulties or disabilities (including those where the Official Solicitor has become involved), foreign nationals, and clients from the Romany Gypsy / Travelling communities. Max is Ranked in both the Legal 500 and Chambers & Partners.

We offer advice to clients in the following areas of Family and Childcare Law:

Public Law Children Advice (involvement with Social Services)

- ◇ Care Proceedings (Care & Supervision Orders)
- ◇ Emergency Protection Orders
- ◇ Pre-proceedings meetings (receipt of “Letter before Proceedings”)
- ◇ Placement Order
- ◇ Adoption
- ◇ Children in Need (CHIN) & Child Protection Conferences
- ◇ Secure Accommodation Order
- ◇ Deprivation of Liberty Orders (DOLs)
- ◇ Recovery Order
- ◇ Contact with a child in Care
- ◇ Special Guardianship Orders
- ◇ Discharge of Care Order
- ◇ Wardship – Inherent Jurisdiction Applications in the High Court
- ◇ Kinship Assessments, Viability Assessment and Connected Persons Assessments



Private Law Children Advice

- ◇ Adoption
- ◇ Where a child lives and who they spend time with
- ◇ Child Abduction including cases through the International Child Abduction & Contact Unit [ICACU]
- ◇ Prohibited Steps Order
- ◇ Relocation Orders
- ◇ Specific Issue Orders
- ◇ Special Guardianship Orders
- ◇ Surrogacy

Matrimonial and Relationship Advice

- ◇ Divorce and Dissolution of Civil Partnerships
- ◇ Finances upon Divorce or Dissolution of Civil Partnerships
- ◇ Prenuptial / Pre-Civil Partnership Agreements & Postnuptial / Post Civil Partnership Agreements
- ◇ Unmarried couples Advice

Domestic Abuse & Personal Protection Advice

- ◇ Non-Molestation Orders
- ◇ Occupation Orders
- ◇ Forced Marriage Protection Orders

FUNDING

– Private Paying

We offer flexibility in obtaining advice which is bespoke for you. We can provide a number of funding options depending on the level of advice you require and your budget including:

Fixed fee initial consultation

Where legal proceedings have not yet started, we can offer an initial meeting to have discussions about your case and plan how you wish to move forward; following the meeting we can confirm any advice in writing for you. We offer an initial meeting for £240 + VAT. If you then wish to continue instructing us we can set out an estimate of costs and the basis upon which you will be instructing us.

Hourly rate private fee scheme

We will endeavour to provide an estimate of costs for the work we need to undertake on your behalf. Hourly rates will vary depending upon the experience of the lawyer that you choose to instruct. During the course of your case we will provide you with updates at agreed intervals (minimum of one month) to assist you in keeping track of the costs you are having to spend.

Staged payments

Depending upon the case and your financial situation we may be in a position to agree staged payments in order to assist you in being able to afford your legal costs.

Unbundled Legal Services

Some clients like to undertake work on their own case, so this option allows you to separate out different aspects and stages of your legal proceedings. This option is particularly useful for those that have a strict budget or where people might otherwise have to represent themselves throughout proceedings.

FUNDING

– Legal Aid

We are contracted with the Legal Aid Agency [LAA] which means we are able to offer legal aid to those that qualify in cases which are already in court proceedings and those which have not yet reached court.

Public Law Children Cases

Your entitlement to Legal Aid will depend upon the type of case that has been issued; in certain circumstances you are automatically entitled and in others the LAA will look at your Means and/or Merits of the case.

Private Law Children Cases & Cases involving Finances arising from the breakdown of a marriage or civil partnership

You may be entitled to Legal Aid but this will depend upon your means and the merits of your case. Additionally the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012 [LASPO] sets out further criteria that you must satisfy in order to obtain legal aid.

Domestic Abuse & Forced Marriage Protection

If you are the victim of domestic abuse or a forced marriage then you will be entitled to legal aid. The eligibility criteria for this type of legal aid differs from Public and Private Law legal aid.

Other Legal Aid

If you are not in court proceedings you can still obtain legal aid for advice in family cases. If you have received a "Letter Before Proceedings" from a Local Authority / Social Services then you will automatically be entitled to Legal Aid. For all other areas of Family Law advice outside of court proceedings we will need to review whether funding is available on a case by case basis.

We hope you find the information in this leaflet useful.

If you require any further information or assistance please do not hesitate to contact us on **020 8299 6000**.



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