



Children

 Paris Smith



Southampton's premier law firm - providing a full range of legal services to individuals and businesses across the Solent region for over 190 years.

Our aim is simple...

“To recognise and respond to our clients’ needs with prompt, clear and practical advice, based on a thorough knowledge of their situation.”

We understand that issues relating to children are of the greatest importance and need to be addressed quickly and sensitively.

Paris Smith offers a specialist Family Law Department with expertise in all private law matters relating to children.

Residence - Where will the children live?

Contact - Spending time with the children

Emergency Remedies

Rights of Parents who are not married

Adoption

Special Guardianship

Mediation

Financial Issues relating to children

Specific Issues

Residence

Where a child should live following a separation is known as residence. At an early stage we will advise you on your options, any steps which you may need to take and how to best protect the interests of your children.

Contact

When parents separate there can be problems with continuing contact between a parent and child. Where the parents are not able to agree the best arrangements for their children, we can advise you on the best way forward in order to resolve what we recognise can be an area with very real practical difficulties.

Emergency Remedies

There may be times when swift action is needed in order to protect your child, for example where your partner may seek to abduct your child and take him or her abroad. We can offer a fast response to advise you and to help you make decisions which may need to be taken quickly to protect your child.

Rights of Parents who are not married

If you are not married, the rights and responsibilities which you may have in relation to your children may differ from those of married parents. We can advise you on your rights and how to obtain the same rights as married parents if required.

Special Guardianship

Often people can find themselves looking after children for whom they have no official responsibility. This can arise from new relationships or helping family members in difficult circumstances. It may be appropriate for you to change your legal status in respect of most children, but you should not attempt to do so without taking specialist legal advice.

Problem Solving

Mediation and Collaborative law provide alternative means for parents to resolve problems following the breakdown of their relationship without recourse to the courts. As such, they are particularly appropriate for matters relating to children. Mediation is an active, non-confrontational process where a neutral person helps both of you to negotiate directly to reach a decision which best serves the interests of your child. Collaborative law is a process with similar aims, but with each person's lawyer present in place of a neutral mediator. Please ask us for our separate brochure, which provides more details about our mediation and collaborative law services.

Financial Issues

There may be financial issues following the breakdown of a relationship which relate directly to children. These may arise whether or not you and your partner have been married. We can advise you as to the likely future financial provision which will need to be made for a child and of any steps which you may need to take to protect your future and the future of your child. You may have entitlements of which you are unaware and should therefore take advice. For example you may be entitled to the provision of a home or lump sum of money as well as child support.

Specific Issues

As a parent, you will continue to have responsibility for your children even after the end of your relationship. There may be times when major issues relating to your child's welfare cannot be agreed. These may include the choice of school, whether a child should follow a particular religion or whether one of you should have the right to take your child to live in another country.

We can advise you of your rights and obligations and of the steps which you can take when an agreement cannot be reached.

How We Operate

If you would like to speak to one of our child law specialists, please telephone or write to us. You will normally be offered an initial free 30-minute interview, which will provide you with an opportunity to meet one of us and explain your particular circumstances. This time will also provide us with an opportunity to explain the available options and any urgent steps which you may need to take.

If you have a case and you wish to take it up, we will:

Write to you setting out the terms and conditions under which we will provide you with our services.

Agree with you and confirm the precise steps to be taken in relation to your particular problem.

Keep you fully informed in writing of developments as the case proceeds.

Provide you with our best estimate of the likely costs of the whole case at the first meeting and discuss with you how the case can be financed.

Discuss progress and costs with you at regular intervals.

The Family Law Department includes members of Resolution and the Law Society's Family Law Panel.

If you would like more information, please contact the head of our family team, Huw Miles on [023 8048 2482](tel:02380482482)

Fees

We understand that costs are a major concern, and we ensure that our charges are clear. We provide information on our charges before work begins, with our letters of engagement setting out the work involved and the fee basis, as well as dealing with other relevant or critical issues.

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