



# Helen Blackburn

## Helen Blackburn

### Partner

‘Her knowledge is second to none’

*Chambers UK 2025*

‘She always advises me very well and I am very satisfied with her services’

*Chambers UK 2025*

‘Helen is extremely professional, helpful, understanding and gets things done in the best of ways’

*Chambers UK 2025*

‘Helen Blackburn is exceptional. She is incredibly conscientious & hard working’

*The Legal 500 UK 2025*

‘Helen Blackburn is totally calm and unflappable. Conscientious and reliable to a tee, really thinks things through, and has an eye on the long term goal. Tactical and very wise’.

‘She combines razor sharp technical knowledge with an empathetic and client-focused manner. She is somebody you would want on your side in any litigation involving international children’

*The Legal 500 UK 2024*

‘Helen is outstanding and extremely easy to deal with. She has provided me with excellent results by her preparation and attention to detail.

Her attention to detail is a dream and she walks along with the client hand in hand’

*Chambers UK 2024*

‘Helen Blackburn is an expert in Hague Convention work. She frequently represents clients in international abduction cases and broader Children Act proceedings that span jurisdictions’



*Chambers UK 2023*



Helen is a Partner at The International Family Law Group LLP.

She specialises in family law concerning children and has a particular expertise in child abduction law and other cases concerning children with an international dimension or involving the cross-border movement of children.

She has extensive experience of cases involving arrangements for children, custody/residence, contact/access (domestic and international), adoption (domestic and inter country), the reciprocal enforcement of foreign orders, international relocation/leave to remove applications and jurisdiction disputes.

Helen is a Fellow of the International Academy of Family Lawyers (IAFL).

Helen is accredited by Resolution as a Specialist Family lawyer with a particular specialism in Child Abduction and Private Children Law.



Helen was named The Times '*Lawyer of the week*' in September 2020 having represented clients in two separate successful Court of Appeal decisions in quick succession.

Chambers UK have ranked Helen as a Children: Cross-border specialist since 2006 and she is ranked as a Leading Individual in Legal 500.

Helen has represented clients (parents and children) in proceedings heard at all levels of court in England and Wales including in the House of Lords and latterly the UK Supreme Court. Many of her cases have been instrumental in developing the law in England and Wales most notably *re M and another (Children) (Abduction: Rights of Custody)* [2007] UKHL 55 (which established the procedure that is used in England and Wales when settlement is pleaded as defence within 1980 Hague Convention proceedings) and *LC (Children), Re* [2014] UKSC 1 (15 January 2014) (which determined the relevance of the state of mind of an adolescent in determining their own habitual residence).

Helen helped set up CALA (the Child Abduction Lawyers Association – the first formal association for child abduction law specialists in England and Wales). She was a founding member, founding committee member and Chair of CALA for three years from 2015 to 2018.

Helen has written for various legal journals and publications (most notably writing the chapters on Child Abduction, International Adoption and Legal Aid in *The International Family Law Practice* published by LexisNexis) and is a frequent lecturer on family law domestically and internationally.

Helen has been interviewed by national television media and provided expert evidence in cases heard in the USA and Europe.

Children

**Adoption and Surrogacy**

**Child Abduction**

**Arrangements for Children**

**Child Relocation: Moving Abroad with a Child**



## Cross Border Enforcement

## Parental Responsibilities

### Testimonials

- *'She always advises me very well and I am very satisfied with her services.'*
- *'Helen has proved so knowledgeable and gives me all the time that I need.'*
- *'Helen is excellent across all boards – when she instructs counsel she will have already thought of all the answers to your queries and her instincts are spot-on.'*
- *'Helen is extremely professional, helpful, understanding and gets things done in the best of ways.'*
- *'Her knowledge is second to none.'*
- *'Helen is formidable in how good and prepared her cases are.'*

### Chambers UK 2025

- *'Helen Blackburn is exceptional. She is incredibly conscientious and hard working'*

### The Legal 500 UK 2025

- *'Helen Blackburn combines razor sharp technical knowledge with an empathetic and client-focused manner. She is somebody you would want on your side in any litigation involving international children'.*
- *'Helen Blackburn is totally clam and unflappable. Conscientious and reliable to a tee, really thinks things through, and has an eye on the long term goal. Tactical and very wise'.*



● *'Helen Blackburn has decades of experience, is hardworking but personable and a pleasure to deal with'.*

● *'Helen has been not only a great lawyer but was also very in tune with the stress and anxiety I was going through. I really needed someone to talk to and Helen was very calm and had a warm approach.'*

● *'Helen is outstanding and extremely easy to deal with. She has provided me with excellent results by her preparation and attention to detail.'*

● *'Her attention to detail is a dream and she walks along with the client hand in hand.'*

#### **Chambers UK 2024**

● *'Helen Blackburn is an expert in Hague Convention work.'*

● *'She frequently represents clients in international abduction cases and broader Children Act proceedings that span jurisdictions'*

● *'Helen always brings calm to what could be otherwise very tense situations' Her understanding of the law and of human psychology are second to none'.*

● *'She's on top of the detail and she knows the law. She projects an air of calm authority to her clients.'*

● *'She's very calm, efficient and knows her stuff. She is caring about her clients'.*

● *'Helen is really experienced and has probably seen it all. She is never flustered and is very calm, methodical and constructive in her approach'.*

● *'Helen Blackburn has decades of experience, is hardworking but personable and a pleasure to deal with'.*



### **The Legal 500 UK 2024**

● *'Whether instructed by her or in a case against her, you will absolutely need to bring your 'A' game.'*

● *'Helen Blackburn is one of the most experienced international children lawyers around. Her practice is almost exclusively High Court and Court of Appeal based. She has an excellent knowledge of her subject area which she combines with great judgement and an impressive client skill. She is the most meticulous solicitor I have come across. She inspires confidence in her clients and counsel alike with her calm confident manner. She is undoubtedly one of the sharpest knives in the drawer!'*

### **The Legal 500 UK 2023**

● *'Her efficiency and knowledge of her subject is very impressive'.*

● *'She is very knowledgeable in the field of international family law, particularly international parental child abduction'.*

### **Chambers UK 2022**

● *'Helen Blackburn was an outstanding in every regard. I had the best support and I can not imagine that my case could have been put forward in any better way. I am deeply thankful for her open ears, impressed by her thoughtful and brilliant mind, her patience with my demanding involvement. She paid attention to every detail and was able to take in a broad and complex amount of information effortlessly.'*



● *'Helen Blackburn is a real star in children work. She is caring, empathetic and has incredible attention to detail.'*

● *'Helen Blackburn – her case preparation is impeccable and her understanding of the needs of the client is always spot on. It is clear that she has the confidence of her clients and she is always sensitive to their emotional as well as practical needs.'*

### **The Legal 500 UK 2022**

● *'Helen is a go-to lawyer in this area; she has an encyclopaedic knowledge of law and practice, not just here but abroad as well. She knows the answers, she has a great knowledge of practice and procedure, and judges love her.'*

● *'She's an intellectual powerhouse and one of the most well-prepared and thorough lawyers I have ever come across. Every case is immaculately presented, she puts you at ease the moment you speak to her and she's excellent with clients. She deals with the most complex international cases.'*

● *'Helen Blackburn was amazing and offered lots of communication – her dedication was truly amazing.'*

### **Chambers UK 2021**

● *'Helen Blackburn is one of the top children lawyers in London. She has an exceptionally strong practice across all areas of children's law, particularly those cases with an international dimension.'*

● *'Helen Blackburn must be one of the leading children practitioners working in London.'*





● *'Helen Blackburn is outstanding.'*

### **The Legal 500 UK 2021**

● *'Helen is held as an expert in Hague Convention work.'*

● *'She frequently represents clients in international abduction cases and broader Children's Act proceedings that span jurisdictions.'*

● *'She's very experienced and is one of the calmest solicitors under pressure I've ever come across.'*

### **Chambers UK 2020**

● *'Helen Blackburn is a leading figure in international family law. Her dedication and attention to detail make her a real pleasure to be instructed by. She always goes above and beyond to get the best outcome for her clients.'*

● *'Helen is a stellar lawyer. Smart and compassionate.'*

### **The Legal 500 UK 2019**

● *'Leading Individual.'*

● *'Top of the field in international child cases.'*

● *'Caring and tenacious and knows every important detail of her cases.'*

● *'Ranked lawyer for Children: Cross-Border Disputes, for her notable experience in cross-border abduction cases.'*

● *'Very knowledgeable, highly reliable and completely authoritative.'*

### **Chambers UK 2018**





● *'One of the most effective English lawyers on international child abduction.'*

### **The Legal 500 UK 2017**

#### Appointments

- Helen is a Fellow of the International Academy of Family Lawyers (IAFL)
- Helen is a former Chair of CALA (Child Abduction Lawyers Association) from Autumn 2015-Spring 2018
- The Child Abduction Lawyers Association (CALA)
- Resolution (Accredited as a specialist family lawyer)
- Reunite: International Child Abduction Centre
- The Law Society

#### Publications

- *'The International Family Law Practice'* 2021 -2022 published by Family Law, LexisNexis (sixth edition) – chapters on : Child Abduction, International Adoption and Legal Aid
- *'The International Family Law Practice'* 2016 – 2017 published by Family Law, LexisNexis (fifth edition) – chapters on : Child Abduction, International Adoption and Legal Aid



- *'The International Family Law Practice'* 2015 – 2016 published by Family Law, LexisNexis (fourth edition) – chapters on : Child Abduction, International Adoption and Legal Aid
- *'The International Family Law Practice'* 2013 – 2014 published by Family Law, LexisNexis (third edition) – chapters on : Child Abduction International Adoption and Legal Aid
- *'The International Family Law Practice'* 2012 -2013 published by Family Law, LexisNexis (second edition) – chapters on : International Adoption and Legal Aid
- *'The Modern Family'* Resolution's publication – author of the chapter entitled *'The Global Child'*

## Reported Decisions

- *K (A Child), Re (Setting Aside 1980 Hague Convention Return Order) (Rev1) [2025]*  
EWHC 210 (Fam)
- *E, Z, D, V (Welfare), Re [2025]* EWHC 378 (Fam)
-



*Father v Mother & Anor* [2024] EWHC 3332 (Fam)



*D v D & Ors* [2024] EWHC 2687 (Fam)



*KS v CS* [2024] EWHC 2115 (Fam)



*Re E, Z, D, V (Inherent jurisdiction: Refusal of Return Order)* [2024] EWHC 988 (Fam)



*X v X & Anor (Time Barred Adoption)* [2024] EWHC 364 (Fam)



*Re P (Inherent Jurisdiction Return: Return Order: Welfare Analysis)* [2023] EWHC 225 (Fam)



*Re M (Allegations of Domestic Abuse: Welfare Hearing)* [2023] EWHC 2869 (Fam)



*Re P (Inherent Jurisdiction Return: Allegations of Female Genital Mutilation and Domestic Abuse: Fact Finding)* [2022] EWHC 1722 (Fam)



*Re M (Allegations of Domestic Abuse: Fact Finding)* [2022] EWHC 2699 (Fam)



*Re M: Private Law Children Proceedings: Case Management: Intimate Images* [2022] EWHC 986 (Fam)



*Da Silva v Pereira Jr (Abduction: Article 13B and child's objections)* [2022] EWHC 1193 (Fam) (11 May 2022)



- *Re M (A child)* [2021] EWHC 3225 (Fam) (1 December 2021)
- *NP v DP (Hague Convention; abducting parent refusing to return)* [2021] EWHC 3626 (Fam) (17 November 2021)
- *Re A (Hague Convention: Wrongful Retention)* [2021] EWHC 1204 (Fam) (11 May 2021)
- *AB v CD (Abduction; Undertakings)* [2021] EWHC 665 (Fam) (16 March 2021)
- *JM v RM (Rev 1)* [2021] EWHC 315 (Fam) (22 February 2021)
- *B (A Child) (Abduction: Habitual Residence)* [2020] EWCA Civ 1187 (10 September 2020)
- *M (Children : Habitual Residence : 1980 Hague Child Abduction Convention)* [2020] EWCA Civ 1105 (25 August 2020)
- *FX and MJX v CAFCASS Legal* [2020] EWHC 1227 (Fam) (18 May 2020)
- *H (Children: Relocation), Re* [2019] EWHC 2881 (Fam) (30 October 2019)
- *SR v MA (Temporary Leave To Remove From the Jurisdiction)* [2019] EWHC 435 (Fam) (25 February 2019)
- *Re W (Children : Abduction: Implementation of Return Order) V* [2019] EWHC 357 (Fam) (22 February 2019)
- *RVH v TF (Non Hague Convention: Refusal of Summary Return)* [2018] EWHC 1680 (Fam) (14 June 2018)
- *W, Re* [2018] EWCA Civ 664 (27 March 2018)
- *FE v YE* [2017] EWHC 2165 (Fam) (25 August 2017)



- *RS (A Child), Re* [2015] EWHC 2880 (Fam) (29 July 2015)
- *LS (A Child), Re* [2015] EWHC 2824 (Fam) (08 June 2015)
- *LC (Children), Re* [2014] UKSC 1 (15 January 2014)
- *G (A Child), Re* [2014] EWCA Civ 680 (19 May 2014)
- *G (A Child), Re* [2013] EWHC 4017 (Fam) (13 December 2013)
- *LC (Children)* [2013] EWCA Civ 1058 (15 August 2013)
- *P v G* [2010] EWHC 1311 (Fam) (30 April 2010)
- *W v W* [2009] EWHC 3288 (Fam) (10 December 2009)

To instruct Helen Blackburn, or for more information



Email



+44 (0)20 3178 5668



Start your Online Enquiry

PDF/PRINT



Linkedin-in



