

Sarah Williams

Head of Surrogacy, Adoption, Fertility & Modern Family

"..Sarah's encyclopaedic knowledge of the law relating to surrogacy and her contacts both domestically and internationally make her the "go to" in this area of work. She was utterly brilliant in a recent and very complex international surrogacy case, leaving no stone unturned getting the best result for her client."

Michael Mylonas QC, Serjeant's Inn and the Lawyer's
"Barrister of the Year 2019"



Sarah is a Legal Director in the Payne Hicks Beach Family department, and the Head of the Surrogacy, Adoption, Fertility and Modern Family law practice. In addition to being an experienced family lawyer, Sarah has a Court of Protection practice focused on health and welfare disputes concerning vulnerable and incapacitated adults. She has a wide range of experience, including matters concerning the withdrawal of life sustaining treatment. Sarah spent the first decade of her career as a practising Family Barrister at a leading set of chambers representing parents, children, guardians and the Official Solicitor in both public and private law. Sarah was appointed as Junior Counsel to the Crown by the Attorney General after a highly competitive selection process.

Prior to joining Payne Hicks Beach, Sarah was in-house Counsel for a US firm where she worked extensively on an ultra-high net worth Californian divorce and contested children proceedings. Thereafter she joined a specialist family law firm where she developed her expertise in complex international surrogacy, fertility and modern family law, representing internationally famous clients from the fields of sports and media.

"Possessed of that winning combination of intelligence, capacity for hard work and charm", Sarah is adept at handling her cases with the utmost discretion and sensitivity. She is "a true fighter in pursuit of her clients' interests" and determined to get the very best outcome for them. She is often called to comment on the latest legal developments by the national press and makes regular contributions to specialist family law journals.

Sarah is a member of the Family Law Bar Association, Association of Lawyers for Children, both the Adoption Committee and the Assisted Reproduction Technology Committee of the American Bar Association and sits pro bono on the Men Having Babies US Grant Committee. Sarah is a 2021 Guest Lecturer on Law and Ethics at King's College London (Medical School) and also at Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust (Medical Foundation Programme). She is the Vice Chair of the Bar Liaison Committee and sits on the Executive Committee of Inner Temple. Sarah is an active member of the Mentoring Scheme for pupil barristers at Inner Temple.

Qualified 1995, joined Payne Hicks Beach 2020.

Sarah writes numerous articles and contributions in the national, legal press and law journals and, in particular, in the **International Family Law Journal**. Sarah is a contributing author for the esteemed **International Comparative Legal Guide - Family Law 2021**.

"..Brilliant on the law, super with clients and extremely well connected, Sarah is the first choice when dealing with surrogacy and fertility work, particularly where the work is complex or has an international element."

Michael Mylonas QC, Serjeant's Inn and the Lawyer's "Barrister of the Year 2019"

"Sarah is bright, strategic, hardworking and savvy...always a pleasure to work with. I was extremely fortunate to work with her on a number of important and challenging cases."

Peter Birkett QC, Former Leader of the Northern Circuit, Master of the Bench, Inner Temple and former Head of Chambers, 18 St John Street, Manchester

"I was instructed by Sarah in a hugely complicated matter. She is a superb lawyer who is absolutely top notch. She balanced a very human approach to the client, whilst processing and organising extremely complex material in a clear, concise and timely way. She is immediately responsive to questions and makes the whole process incredibly smooth. She was very alert to the need to reassure the client and keep matters progressing."

Dr Chris Danbury M.Phil FRCP FRCA FFICM Consultant Intensive Care Physician and Mediator

<http://www.intensivecarespecialists.co.uk/mediation/>

"Sarah has a detailed understanding of the legal framework, and excellent client relationship skills. The case we were involved in together was emotionally fraught and legally difficult, and Sarah's calm, reassuring and authoritative manner was invaluable."

Dr Rob George, Barrister at Harcourt Chambers and Associate Professor of Family Law at UCL and "International Family Lawyer of the Year" Lexis Awards 2021