



Call 1979  
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**Martha Cover**  
Joint Head of Chambers

## AREAS OF PRACTICE

### Children

Martha Cover specialises in public and private law Children Act proceedings. She has extensive experience in representing parents and children in cases of serious death and injury to a child, and of concurrent criminal and care proceedings. She appeared in the "miracle baby" case, and has a particular interest in cases where children are being brought up in unusual belief systems. She also specialises in adoption law, both international and domestic, wardship, and difficult and protracted private law disputes.

Martha regularly lectures and writes on children law matters. She has recently written for the Times and appeared on Newsnight to discuss the wider policy issues affecting care proceedings in the aftermath of the death of Baby P. The link to the Times article is <http://business.timesonline.co.uk/tol/business/law/article5281792.ece?token=null&offset=0&page=1>

Martha is a member of the Association of Lawyers for Children and is the elected representative of the Family Law Bar Association on the General Council of the Bar.

## REPORTED CASES

**Re Haringey London Borough Council v C, E and Another Intervening** [2006] EWHC 1620 (Fam) [2007] 1 FLR 1035 (Fam)

Care order – Freeing order – Adoption – ‘Miracle baby’ – Birth parents unknown – Whether religious belief a pre-eminent factor in welfare – Whether adoption has benefits not provided by residence or special guardianship

**Re U (Care Proceedings: Criminal Conviction: Refusal to Give Evidence)** [2006] EWHC 372 [2006] 2 FLR 690 (Fam)

Care proceedings - Refusal to give evidence - Advice of criminal lawyer - Criminal conviction - Pending appeal - Weight to attach to conviction - Lack of practical sanction - Cross-examination of witnesses allowed

**Re N (Sexual Abuse Allegations: Professionals Not Abiding by Findings of Fact)** [2005] 2 FLR 340

Contact - Implacable hostility - Interim care order - Role of outside agencies in contact

disputes

**Haringey London Borough Council v C, E and Another Intervening** [2004] EWHC 2580 (Fam) [2005] 2 FLR 47

Care – Threshold - "Miracle birth" claim - Child unrelated to supposed parents - Trafficking allegations - Risk to child in being raised as "miracle child"

**Re W and X (Wardship: Relatives Rejected as Foster Carers)** [2003] EWHC 2206 (Fam) [2004] 1 FLR 415 2003 Fam Law 883

Care proceedings in relation to four children – three living with grandparents after death of sibling – fourth child placed with a view to adoption – court finding that remaining three should stay with grandparents – grandparents rejected by local authority as approved foster carers – children made wards of court with residence order in favour of grandparents and supervision order in favour of local authority

**Re A (Care Proceedings: Asylum Seekers)** [2003] 2 FLR 921 FD

Care - Immigration - Family subject to removal directions - Father implied he might kill himself and children - Assessments found no real risk to children - Parents supporting continuation of care proceedings - Whether proceedings to continue

**Re N (Contact: Minor Seeking Leave to Defend and Removal of Guardian)** [2003] 1 FLR 652

Contact - Minor seeking leave to defend proceedings - Minor seeking removal of guardian

**Re M (Residence)** [2002] 2 FLR 1059

Expert evidence - Reasons for departing from expert evidence

**Re A (Protection from Offenders Regulations)** [1999] 1 FLR 697

Care - Foster-parents - Conviction for specified offence - Residence

**Re AS (Secure Accommodation Order)** [1999] 1 FLR 103

Secure accommodation - Application for secure accommodation order - Procedure

**Re S (Appeal from Principal Registry: Procedure)** [1997] 2 FLR 856

Practice and procedure - Care order granted by district judge at Principal Registry - Mother's appeal

**Re W (Wardship: Discharge: Publicity)** [1995] 2 FLR 466

Publicity - Wardship - Discharge of wardship proceedings after Children Act 1989 in force

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