

## Deirdre Smythe

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### General Information

A dual-qualified barrister at the English and Irish Bar, Dee Smythe has extensive experience in family and criminal law, as well as other aspects of civil law.

With an empathetic approach, Dee speaks on behalf of those who may not be able to articulate themselves, including those with a disability and mental health issues. She fights on her client's behalf to get the best possible case outcome.

Dee's legal career began as a Child Protection Officer and a Children's Rights Advocate. She visited a number of Disabled Children's Homes to ensure their environment was safe and that proper education was provided. Dee has a background in social work, the Probation Service and the Ministry of Justice, whilst completing her law degree and post qualifications for the bar. She also has experience as a County Court Advocate.

As a result, Dee has a unique understanding of the social care system, legal system and prison service and adopts a holistic approach to helping her clients resolve their cases. Dee says, "As a Barrister, I listen to what my clients have to say. I act as I would want to be represented, with respect, warmth and sincerity."

Dee accepts instructions from both solicitors and members of the public. She adopts a balanced approach, representing both claimants and respondents, victims and defendants. She regularly appears in the County Courts, Family Courts and Magistrates' Courts, as well as attending the High Court, Crown Court and Court of Appeal. Dee was part of the legal team at the first-ever televised hearing at the Supreme Court in Ireland in which they won their historic case by a majority ruling.

Passionate about access to justice, Dee completes pro bono work for Justice for Women. She also works pro bono for Bail for Immigration Detainees, representing individuals who are in detention centres.

### Areas of law

- Family & Child Law
- Criminal Law
- Asylum/Human Rights
- Education Law/SEN Issues
- Housing and Landlord/Tenant
- Personal Injury/Road Traffic Accidents
- Prison Law

### Family & Child Law

- Contested care proceedings and adoption
- Non-molestation orders/domestic abuse issues
- Matters concerning family and children disputes, including contact agreements

### Criminal Law

- Assault
- Offences involving violence
- Robbery (gang-related)
- Sexual abuse
- Substance misuse
- Terrorism

### Education

- Barrister-at-Law degree, Kings Inns, Dublin
- Certificate (Arbitration), Chartered Institute of Arbitrators, London
- LLM Masters of Law (International Human Rights), Birmingham City University
- Post Graduate Diploma (Bar Vocational Course), Inns of Court School of Law, London
- Masters degree (Law of the Built Environment), Birmingham City University
- LLB Hons (Law), University of Wolverhampton

### Memberships

- West Midland Family Bar Association
- Birmingham Law Society's Family and Criminal Committees
- Mental Health Lawyer's Association
- Criminal Bar Association.
- Association of Lawyers for Children
- Member of Midland Circuit and Justice.

**Personal Interests**

Beyond her interest in the law, Dee enjoys martial arts and once represented Northern Ireland at the European Championships in Judo. She is a Director of a not-for-profit Community Housing Company. Dee also works with serious risk offenders in hostels, working with them on their sentence plans and helping to rehabilitate them back into the community.

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