

09.30 **Welcome**

Jeanette Bloor, LLG's National Lead for Children Services and Education
Angela Baldwin, Principal Solicitor for Family, Derbyshire County Council

09.35 – 10.30 **Staying on Track - Re A Compliance in Care Proceedings**

This session will delve into the critical importance of compliance within care proceedings, focusing on legal responsibilities, documentation standards, and timelines that safeguard children's welfare. The session will aim to provide clarity on best practices, statutory expectations, and the potential consequences of non-compliance. Through case examples and discussion, we'll examine how effective coordination and accountability can strengthen outcomes and ensure every child's right to timely, consistent protection.

Naomi De Silva, Associate, Browne Jacobson

10.30 – 10.45 **Break**

10.45 – 11.45 **Deprivation of Liberties - Inherent jurisdiction vs. Court of Protection**

In complex children cases concerning 16 – 17-year-olds, professionals may be trying to unpick difficult family dynamics, safeguarding concerns and a child's complex needs. Many children practitioners will be well versed in care proceedings, but more unfamiliar with the world of Court of Protection which opens up to 16-year-olds. Similarly, adults lawyers will be familiar with thorny COP issues but not the interplay with family court proceedings or the Inherent Jurisdiction.

In this session, using case examples, we will talk about that interplay and explore some of the more complex areas including Deprivations of Liberty, care and treatment under the Inherent Jurisdiction/ COP, and the task of care planning for this unique cohort as they transition between children and adult services and through different legal jurisdictions.

Steph Collier, Solicitor, Bevan Brittan
Ellen Lloyd, Associate, Bevan Brittan

11.45 – 12.00 **Break**

12.00 – 12.45 **Finding the Balance - Unregulated placements and secure accommodation**

"Lack of provision" is arguably one of the biggest challenges in current child protection practice and everybody seems to know it, yet it appears very little is being done about it. Lack of provision is an even bigger challenge with restrictive support packages.

In this session, we will consider local authority's statutory and regulatory duties when placing children and take a closer look at the use and difference between unregulated placements and unregistered placements, as well as secure accommodation and continued reliance on the Inherent Jurisdiction to plug the gaps. We'll look at the current case law and at what we can hope might happen next.

Amrita Hurst, Partner, Bevan Brittan

Robyn Griffiths, Senior Solicitor, Bevan Brittan

12.45 – 13.30 Lunch

13.30 – 14.30 A Day in the Life of an In-House Family Court Advocate: Top Tips for Practitioners

Navigating care proceedings as the Applicant solicitor can be multifaceted, dynamic, and demanding. Taking the case to court as the advocate introduces another layer of complexity and challenge. The role of an in-house advocate involves high responsibility and exposure to stressful situations, while also offering an exciting opportunity to develop expertise, build resilience, and deliver meaningful outcomes for the child subject to the proceedings and the Local Authority. This session focuses on effective preparation for hearings, including case analysis, dealing with non-compliance, case summary preparation, and drafting orders. It also covers pre-hearing discussions, courtroom processes, post-court tasks, and practical strategies to strengthen advocacy skills through interactive discussion and real-life examples.

Layla Cakmak, Associate Solicitor & In-House Advocate, Weightmans

14.30 - 14.45 Break

14.45 – 15.30 Age Assessments for Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children

This session will explore the complexities of age assessments for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children by covering statutory frameworks, evidential requirements, and best practice approaches to determining age in child protection contexts. The speaker will explore challenges in balancing safeguarding responsibilities with the rights of the child, discuss recent case law provide practical guidance and risk mitigation strategies.

James Arrowsmith, Partner, Browne Jacobson

15.30 - 15.45 Break

15.45 - 16.30 Mental Health & Wellbeing in Childcare and Litigation

This session explores the realities of working in childcare and litigation, focusing on mental wellbeing and resilience. Marion shares the warts-and-all experience of childcare work, addressing challenges from the Court and all Respondent parties, the personal impact of criticism of the Local Authority, and the importance of recognising how this affects you as an individual while developing resilience to manage the work. Henry examines the litigation perspective, offering guidance on handling situations where a litigant in person begins to behave in ways that “cross the line.”

Marion Robinson, Partner, Weightmans

16.30 Close

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