



## Michelle Pratley

Year of call: 2006

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Michelle Pratley is an experienced advocate with a successful public law and regulatory practice. Her areas of particular expertise are mental capacity and mental health, education, community care, employment and regulation. She is recommended as a leading junior by Chambers and Partners and The Legal 500. Michelle spent six years as a barrister at 4-5 Gray's Inn Square before joining 39 Essex Chambers. She began her professional life practising as a solicitor.

## Areas of expertise

Administrative and Public

Regulatory and Disciplinary

### Administrative and Public

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#### Mental capacity and mental health

*"Excellent, a voice of calm in troubled waters, who produces incredibly impressive advocacy and written work."* Chambers and Partners

Michelle has built a thriving practice in the Court of Protection and is regularly instructed in complex disputes by local authorities, public bodies, family members and the Official Solicitor. She has acted in a wide range of welfare proceedings, including disputes over deprivation of liberty, forced marriage, residence, care and contact. Michelle has also appeared in a number of cases involving serious medical treatment and applications for the appointment of a deputy for property and affairs.

Michelle has been instructed in a range of mental health proceedings, including applications to displace a nearest relative on the basis that they have unreasonably objected to their relative's admission for treatment.

#### Education law

*"She is great and clients absolutely love her. She is very reassuring."* Chambers and Partners

Michelle has a wealth of experience in all aspects of education law. Her clients include local authorities, universities, academies and schools as well as students and parents. She regularly advises on the application of discrimination law in an educational context, and in particular on the operation of the Equality Act and the duty to make reasonable adjustments. Michelle has particular experience in the field of special educational needs; advising and appearing in cases before the First-tier Tribunal and Upper Tribunal. She is most frequently instructed in high-value cases involving intensive therapy provision and placement in

independent or residential schools. She has also appeared in complex admission and exclusion appeals.

### Community care

Michelle has a growing community care practice and has been instructed on a raft of applications for judicial review. She has advised on issues ranging from where an individual is ordinarily resident to disputes over payments to fostering agencies, and has been involved in a number of challenges arising from the complexities of the "leaving care" provisions.

### Employment law

Michelle's experience in employment law includes unfair and wrongful dismissal, breach of contract, redundancy, unlawful deductions from wages and TUPE transfers. She has particular expertise in equality and discrimination, having acted in numerous cases concerning discrimination on the basis of sex, race and disability before the Employment Tribunal and Employment Appeals Tribunal.

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