

Alice Irving



Call: 2018

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Profile

Alice Irving is a public and civil law practitioner with a wide-ranging practice. Her depth of experience across public, community care, housing, education, and discrimination law ideally positions her to offer clients holistic advice across the multiple legal issues impacting their lives. Alice's expertise is well recognised at the Bar, and she is ranked across her practice areas by *Legal 500* and *Chambers and Partners*.

Alice has a particular interest in working with Disabled clients and their families, and she is currently instructed by a collective of Disabled People's Organisations to ensure the voices of Disabled people are heard in the Covid-19 Inquiry.

What people are saying about Alice

"Alice is one of the leading junior education barristers, with particular expertise in relation to special educational needs." —Legal 500, 2026

"She is a very persuasive oral advocate, taking challenging opponents and clients in her stride, and finding a careful balance where complexities around professional duties (e.g. in mental capacity disputes) arise. She gives down to earth sensible advice that gets straight to the point even against very complex factual and legal backgrounds." —Legal 500, 2026

"Alice Irving is fantastic and incredibly detailed. She goes above and beyond in her commitment to the case and the facts."—Chambers and Partners, 2026

"A very clear thinker, and an excellent, forceful advocate, with an excellent grasp of discrimination issues in housing matters."—Chambers and Partners, 2026

"Alice is willing to help at an early stage of a case. She thinks strategically, and her research is meticulous. She has excellent knowledge and awareness of public policy issues."—Legal 500, 2025

"Alice Irving is very knowledgeable and sensible. She's a very impressive advocate who gets amazing results for her clients."—Chambers and Partners, 2025

"She is collaborative and responsive with solicitors, and creative and detailed in written advice and pleadings."—Chambers and Partners, 2025

"Alice manages to combine a brilliant legal brain with an effortless charm and a fantastic way with clients. Her advice is clear, to the point and extremely helpful."—Chambers and Partners, 2024

"Alice is a calm, incisive and compelling advocate and is wonderful at dealing with vulnerable clients."—Legal 500, 2024

"Alice Irving is highly intelligent and strategic, with great attention to detail, and she is absolutely brilliant in dealing with vulnerable clients."—Chambers and Partners, 2024

"Alice is turbo-powered. She is doing cases above her call year."—Chambers and Partners, 2023

"She is an exceptionally strong advocate. When you instruct Alice, you know you are in safe hands."—Chambers and Partners, 2023

"Alice has an in-depth knowledge of, and is passionate about, education and public law work. The quality of her drafting is second to none, having an uncanny ability to absorb large amounts of information and distil this into clear and coherent submissions."—Legal 500, 2023

Education

Doctor of Philosophy in Law, University of Oxford, 2019

Bar Professional Training Course, BPP, 2018

Masters of Philosophy in Law, University of Oxford, 2013

Bachelor of Civil Law (Distinction), University of Oxford, 2011 (Second Overall in Year)

Bachelor of Laws (Honours), University of Otago, 2010 (First Overall in Year)

Bachelor of Arts in Community and Family Studies, University of Otago, 2010 (First Overall in Year)

Related practice areas

Housing, Social Welfare and Property

Administrative & Public Law

Education

Children's Rights

Community Care and Health

Anti-Trafficking

Public Law

Alice is regularly instructed in judicial review claims, both as sole counsel and led junior. She acts in individual disputes and complex strategic litigation, and she has experience in urgent claims, including out of hours applications. Recent work includes:

- Representing Orthodox Jewish children who were excluded from a London free school meals programme on the basis that they were attending independent religious schools: *R (GH) v Mayor of London* [2024] EWHC 1305 (Admin).
- A challenge to the decision to exclude asylum seeker accommodation from regulation for houses in multiple occupation. The claim resulted in satellite litigation as to redaction of documents in judicial review proceedings and the requirements of the duty of candour. JUSTICE intervening: *R (IAB) v SSHD, SSLUHC* [2023] EWHC 2930 (Admin), [2024] 1 WLR 1876; *R (IAB) v SSHD* [2024] EWCA Civ 66, [2024] 1 WLR 1916.
- A challenge to the decision to refuse to implement an independent appeals process for decisions local authorities make about adult social care: *R (HL) v SSHSC* [2023] EWHC 866 (Admin).
- A challenge to a local authority's refusal to provide a Disabled Facilities Grant for the claimant to obtain a stairlift: *R (Gulrez) v Redbridge LBC* [2022] EWHC 2908 (Admin), [2023] HLR 12.
- A successful appeal resulting in Court of Appeal guidance on when a court will exercise its discretion to determine judicial review claims that become academic *R (L) v Devon CC* [2021] EWCA Civ 358, [2021] ELR 420.

- Alice has been instructed on numerous other matters, including by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, which was intervening in *R (SM) v SSHD* concerning challenges to the proposed transfer of asylum seekers to Rwanda after the Safety of Rwanda (Asylum and Immigration) Act 2024 became law.

Education Law

Alice is ranked in Band 3 for Education in *Chambers and Partners* and as a Rising Star in *Legal 500*. She accepts instructions across all areas of education law, with a particular specialism in Special Educational Needs and discrimination. She is regularly instructed in both individual and strategic judicial review claims and appears before both the First tier Tribunal and Upper Tribunal. Recent work includes:

- Two challenges to ‘Safety Valve Agreements’ entered by local authorities (Bristol CC and Devon CC) and the Department for Education: *R (AB) v Bristol CC*; *R (AB) v Devon CC*. These agreements require local authorities to cut spending for children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- A challenge to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman’s refusal to investigate complaints about a local authority’s treatment of a Disabled young man, on the basis it had no jurisdiction where there had been a related First-tier Tribunal appeal concerning his Education, Health and Care Plan: *R (Milburn) v LGSCO* [2022] EWHC 1777 (Admin), [2022] ELR 755; *R (Milburn) v LGSCO* [2023] EWCA Civ 207, [2023] PTSR 1250.
- A challenge to a local authority’s delay in issuing a final amended Education, Health and Care Plan following an annual review, which determined that local authorities are required to issue a plan within 12 weeks of the annual review meeting: *R (L) v Devon CC* [2022] EWHC 493 (Admin), [2022] PTSR 1071.
- The first appeal before the Upper Tribunal considering the First-tier Tribunal’s extended jurisdiction to make social care recommendations. Alice was instructed by the appellant, with National Autism Society Intervening: *VS and RS v Hampshire County Council* [2021] UKUT 187 (AAC).

Housing and Social Welfare Law

Alice is ranked in Band 4 for Social Housing in *Chambers and Partners* and as a Rising Star in *Legal 500*. She is regularly instructed as sole counsel in the County Court and High Court on housing matters. She has particular specialisms in homelessness and the housing needs of Disabled people. Recent work includes:

- A successful interim relief application to secure non-bed and breakfast accommodation under s.188(1) Housing Act 1996, where a mandatory order was resisted on the basis of resource constraints: *R (AO) v LB of Haringey*. See *Nearly Legal* write-up [here](#).
- A challenge to a local authority's refusal of a Disabled Facilities Grant: *R (Gulrez)* [2022] EWHC 2908; [2023] HLR 12.
- A successful appeal against a decision that an applicant for homelessness assistance was intentionally homeless because of arrears arising after his housing benefit was suspended. See *Nearly Legal* write-up [here](#).
- A disability discrimination claim against a landlord who failed to make reasonable adjustments in the provision of decant accommodation to a disabled client. Settled for a significant sum.

Community care

Alice is ranked as a Rising Star in Court of Protection: Health and Welfare in *Legal 500*, formerly the Community Care category. This is for her work in relation to adult social care, children's social care, continuing healthcare, and the leaving care regime. Alice is regularly instructed on complex matters concerning the intersection of social care, housing, and/or education. Recent work includes:

- A challenge to the decision to refuse to implement an independent appeals process for decisions local authorities make about adult social care: *R (HL) v SSHSC* [2023] EWHC 866 (Admin).
- Advising on linked possession proceedings and adult social care matters for several clients impacted by the closure of a supported accommodation facility for people with mental health problems.
- A challenge to a local authority's failure to comply with duties owed to a care leaver, including as to pathway planning, and the provision of accommodation and support.
- A challenge to the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman's (PHSO) refusal to determine a complaint concerning an NHS Trust's failure to provide adequate incontinence pads to a disabled individual. The PHSO upheld the complaint, resulting in the family receiving significant compensation.

- Alice is an editor of the *Community Care Law Reports*.

Publications

Alice has published articles in *Counsel Magazine*, *Legal Action Group Magazine*, *Special Needs Jungle* and *LexisNexis*. She is an editor of the *Community Care Law Reports* and updating author of *Atkin's Court Forms on Anti-social Behaviour and Harassment*. She also regularly appears in seminars and writes short blogs on current legal issues, accessible [here](#).