

Richard Freeth

Partner

 **Birmingham**

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Richard is a partner within the education team and has over 20 years' experience of advising on education law issues. He leads on pastoral and SEND work within the education team. He's recognised by Chambers and Legal 500 as a leading individual for advice on education law. Richard advises on a range of issues including admissions, exclusions, SEN and disability and equality issues.

Richard has supported schools through transition to foundation and trust status, established school companies, worked on sponsored academy projects and worked with governing board on their conversion to academy status. He has also clerked numerous admission appeals, exclusion reviews and complaint hearings. He advises and supports a number of local authorities on SEND issues and he has been involved in many SEND Tribunal appeals and a number of Upper Tribunal cases arising out of SEND Tribunal decisions.

Richard has provided training on a range of education law subjects. Alongside this, he continues to support schools, local authorities and health bodies on education/children services related issues. Richard is currently Chair of Trustees at Elm Tree MAT in Warwickshire.

Expertise

Academy trusts and schools

Education

Further education

Featured experience

Special Educational Needs

Working with Local Authority officers to deal with complex SEND tribunal appeals to ensure the LA's position was robustly defended.

Threatened judicial review challenges

Representing a Local Authority in respect of judicial review pre-action protocol letters sent in respect of the Authority's education functions. Successfully defending the LA's position and avoiding unnecessary legal proceedings being brought.

Challenges to admission policies

Representing an academy trust in dealing with complaints made to the Office of the Schools Adjudicator and ensuring the Academy's position was clearly explained and, where appropriate, defended.

Judicial Review of exclusion decision

Represented an academy trust in legal proceedings following a decision not to reinstate a child. Successfully defended the school's position on the basis that it had acted lawfully and in line with statutory guidance.

Testimonials

"Richard is always helpful and responsive to our demands. He is supportive but challenges us when decisions are not in line with legislation."

Chambers and Partners 2023,

"He is a very good lawyer for SEN issues."

Chambers 2022,

"Richard Freeth – outstanding knowledge of the education sector, coupled with timely and astute advice."

Legal 500 2022 ,

"Richard has a wealth of knowledge of the many aspects of the education sector and I am completely confident that he will handle any of my questions appropriately."

Legal 500 2021 ,