

May 19, 2025

Elevating Advocacy: Expert Panel Tackle Cross-Examination of Vulnerable Witnesses in Children's Proceedings



On Monday, 19 May 2025, a notable event aimed at enhancing legal advocacy took place as Victoria Roberts, barrister with Coram Chambers, took part in a panel discussion, chaired by Deborah Piccos, on the complex intricacies of cross-examining vulnerable witnesses within children's proceedings. This successful gathering, co-organised by the London Children's Lawyers and Vyvy Lewis from the Coram Children's Legal Centre, provided a vital platform for legal professionals committed to safeguarding children's rights and well-being.

The event witnessed an impressive turnout, with approximately 150 attendees filling the venue to capacity. Legal practitioners were treated to an engaging evening of learning, partly due to the diligent efforts of the event's co-organisers, Fauzia Mumani, Bridget Thompson, and Raman Rai, all of whom are distinguished members of the legal community.



The list of presenters was as remarkable as the attendance itself, featuring experts from various corners of family law. Raman Rai facilitated the case study (which he drafted) used during the training session.

Victoria Roberts, known for her empathetic approach to advocacy, shared her profound understanding of public law issues that often intersect with the lives of children in vulnerable situations. During the panel discussion, her expertise ensured that delegates left with a comprehensive grasp of the nuances involved in cross-examination. Joining Victoria on the panel, Artis Kakonge, the Deputy Head of Family at No 5 Chambers, brought her extensive experience in family law, navigating the challenging intersections between family legislation and the Court of Protection. Daniel

Longe, a Solicitor-Advocate with 17 years of experience, enriched the discourse with practical insights into contested hearings and safeguarding, essential for practitioners aiming to sharpen their advocacy skills.

Raman Rai, a Partner at JD Spicer Zeb Solicitors and an accredited member of the Law Society's Children Panel, offered valuable perspectives on ensuring that the voices of vulnerable individuals are not only heard but also respected. Elizabeth Wark, a barrister with a unique nursing background, provided critical insights into the emotional and psychological trauma faced by those under duress, while Deborah Piccos, the panel chair, drew on her extensive experience in public law to tie the discussions back to the practical realities of legal practice.

Attendees were afforded further opportunity to engage with the panel and their peers during a lively networking session, which fostered discussions around continued professional development and collaboration in this paramount field of law.

Concluding with strong feedback and palpable enthusiasm, the event undeniably succeeded in its mission to bolster the skills and confidence of legal professionals working on the frontline of children's legal matters.

For further information about the London Children's Lawyers and their commitment to advancing legal standards, please visit their official website [here](#). Together, we can ensure that the rights of our most vulnerable citizens are upheld and advocated for with the utmost diligence and care.