

Biography The Rt. Hon Sir Mathew Thorpe



The Rt. Hon. Sir Mathew Thorpe is a former Lord Justice of Appeal (England and Wales), Vice-President of the Family Division and the inaugural Head of International Family Law. He remains the leading expert in the field of the international movement of children.

Career History

1951-1956	Stowe (Classics)
1957-1959	Balliol College, Oxford (Law)
1961	Called to the Bar, Inner Temple
1963-1980	Junior Practice, 1 Mitre Court Buildings (now 1 Hare Court)
1980-1988	QC, 1 Mitre Court Buildings
1987	Counsel to the Cleveland Inquiry
1988-1995	High Court Judge, Family Division
1995-2013	Lord Justice of Appeal
2005-2013	Vice-President of the Family Division and Head of International Family Justice for England and Wales

Achievements

Sir Mathew has been particularly active in promoting judicial activism. He proposed the creation of the International Hague Network of Judges at the de Ruwenberg Conference in 1998 and successfully campaigned for its growth and development. He initiated the Germanophone/Anglophone Family Law Conference in 1997, Commonwealth/Common Law Family Law Conferences in and after 2000 and Francophone/Anglophone Conference in 2003. In 2010 he launched the Association of International Judges at the Brussels Conference. He chaired the Expert Group on the European Judicial Network which has drafted and published the Best Practice Guide to Proceedings under the 1980 Hague Convention and Article II of Regulation Brussels II Bis.

Sir Mathew handed down the majority of leading judgments in family appeals between 2000 and 2013, particularly those concerning international family law and matrimonial finance.

He travelled widely as the judicial representative of the UK, directing the Office of International Family Justice in London (which handles approximately 250 international family justice referrals per year).

ADR Accreditation

Sir Mathew led the judicial support for ADR in family litigation and the Court of Appeal Family ADR scheme. In November 2007, he qualified as a mediator (ADR Group and Family Mediators Association) and has a Certificate in Family Arbitration (Chartered Institute of Arbitrators, 2012).

Cornwall Award for Outstanding Contribution 2013

In 2011, Sir Mathew won the International Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers 'Jurist of the Year' award. Sir Mathew won the Cornwall Award for Outstanding Contribution 2013 at the Family Law Awards 2013.