

Press Release 09/03/2018

Two leading firms in the world of Education Law have announced a merger to create a leading solicitors' practice to support the needs of disabled children, young people and adults throughout England and Wales. John Ford Solicitors, based in London, and Sinclairs law, a law firm with offices in Wales and West London will on 1st May 2018 join together to create the largest team of expert education and public lawyers in the country. John Ford Solicitors will thereafter be known as "John Ford Solicitors - part of the Sinclairs law group".

John Ford, principal solicitor at John Ford, is already a leading expert in the world of Education and Community Care Law and Public law. He is the lead author of the authoritative text book "*Education Law and Practice*" (Jordans, 4th edition 2016) and joins the newly formed group as senior director. Michael Charles, a renowned Education law specialist and contributing author of the leading Child law practitioner's guide "Clarke Hall and Morrison," retains his role as Chief Executive of the Sinclairs law group.

Sinclairs law already boasts a team of 10 specialist lawyers within the department in both England and Wales and currently has a member who sits on the advisory panel for the Children's Commissioner for Wales. Adam Friel, who operates from the West London office, has an enormous special needs practice alongside Kevin McManamon - regarded as a disability expert within the 2017 edition of Chambers legal directory.

John Ford's team is ranked first for Education (individuals) in Chambers & Partners and ranked in the Legal 500 in the fields of Education and Public Law. It comprises of Karen May, Marian Shaughnessy and Helen Gill - all experienced solicitors who are quoted experts in the field and individually ranked within the highly respected Chambers and Legal 500 directories. They are also recognised experts in education law and they are co-authors of "*Education law and Practice*" and have acted in many of the leading education law cases. Other members of the team are Dearbhla Minogue, trainee solicitor and two paralegals. Further details about our practice can be obtained by visiting www.johnfordsolicitors.co.uk.

Michael Charles said "This is perhaps one of the most exciting developments for the firm this year following the launch of the firm's Headquarter building in Cardiff City Centre. The joining together of both Sinclairs law and John Ford is a further demonstration of the firm's lead in Education and Public Law. It is a development hot on the heels of other very senior appointments by the Sinclairs law group."

John Ford said "I am delighted to be amalgamating with Sinclairs law and together we will make a first class team in supporting children, students and young people and adults with learning difficulties and disabilities, as well as making challenges in other area of public law"

Sinclairs law group also has the approval by the Bar Standards Board as a training establishment for barristers to undertake pupillage and has already made two new appointments. Additionally the firm is recruiting apprentices - one of the first law firms in England and Wales to offer an alternative debt-free route to qualification as a solicitor.