

Important information for new parents

Parental Responsibility

A child's mother automatically has parental responsibility for her child. A father has this responsibility if he is married to or in a civil partnership with the child's mother or is named as the father on the child's birth entry.

Parental responsibility gives a parent legal right in respect of the child.

Child Benefit

Information about Child Benefit can be found on GOV.UK including the Child Benefit claim form CH2(CH2 Claim Form). For your first child, this must be printed out, filled in, and sent to the Child Benefit office. If you don't have access to a printer, you can call 0300 200 3100 and HMRC will send you a form in the post. The form also contains information for the small minority of families who may be eligible for the High-Income Child Benefit Charge (HICBC). If you already have a Child Benefit claim, you can add further children by calling HMRC on the number above.

Marriage or Civil Partnership

If the natural parents of a child marry or enter into a civil partnership with each other at any time in the future, the child's birth entry must be re-registered to reflect this. This is a legal requirement which must be carried out regardless of the surname the child has been given at birth.

To arrange this you need to complete a form which can be downloaded at [Application to re-register a birth following marriage or civil partnership of natural parents - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/forms/application-to-re-register-a-birth-following-marriage-or-civil-partnership-of-natural-parents)

As part of this process you will have the opportunity to change the surname of your child if you wish.

When you have completed the form please contact your local registration office to arrange an appointment to carry out the re-registration. Only one parent need attend this appointment. There is no charge for the appointment, a birth certificate reflecting the details of the re-registered birth entry is charged by statutory fee (currently £11)

Information relating to marriages / civil partnership can be found on the Suffolk County Council website [Memories made in Suffolk - Weddings](#)

Same-sex parents

Please note that if a female partner is named on the original birth entry as 'PARENT', as provided for by the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Act 2008, the references in this leaflet to the father and marriage / civil partnership should also be read as meaning the female partner and marriage / civil partnership respectively.

Adding the Natural Father's name to the birth entry

If a birth has been registered without the inclusion of the natural father his details can be added by re-registering the birth at a later date; the addition of the natural father's details into the birth entry will give you both parental responsibility.

To arrange this you need to complete a form which can be downloaded at [Application to re-register a child's birth and add the natural father's details - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/forms/application-to-re-register-a-childs-birth-and-add-the-natural-father-s-details)

As part of this process, you will have the opportunity to change the surname of your child if both parents agree to do so. If the child is 16 years of age or over, their written consent must be obtained before the surname can be changed. When you have completed the form, please contact your local registration office to arrange an appointment to carry out the re-registration. There is no charge for the appointment a birth certificate reflecting the details of the re-registered birth entry is charged by statutory fee (currently £11)

There is an error on the birth certificate – what should I do?

Once an entry is signed as being accurate the entry is considered complete. A legal process must be followed to make a correction. Some corrections can be undertaken locally, but some will require referral with appropriate evidence to the Registrar General. There will be a charge for consideration of a correction application. (£75 or £90)

Contact one of our offices for guidance initially.

Can I change my child's forenames?

You can change a child's forename in the following circumstances:

- If new forenames were given in baptism or by regular use within 12 months of the birth being registered.
- if your child has been baptised, only the baptismal names can be added to the Either a 'Certificate of name given in Baptism' or 'Certificate of name not given in Baptism' form is available from your local registration office.

There will be a charge for this service. (£40) If a new certificate is required after any additional names have been inserted the standard certificate fee will apply. (currently £11)

- You must be the mother, father, or guardian of the child to make the change.
- Forename changes can only be made once – any further forename changes cannot be recorded.
- You must comply with any court orders in force about the naming of your child.

Can I change my child's surname?

You can only change a child's surname in their original birth record

- to correct a spelling mistake
- at re-registration following marriage or civil partnership to the father or female partner
- at re-registration for the addition of the natural father's details.

Can I remove or amend the father's details from the birth entry?

A paternity correction can only be made when it has been proven either by a DNA test or a court order that the man named on the certificate is not the natural father of the child.

You will need to complete an application form by downloading it from [Application form to remove the wrong father's details from a birth registration - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/forms/application-form-to-remove-the-wrong-father-s-details-from-a-birth-registration) and then contact your local registration office for them to submit for consideration to the Registrar General. There will be a charge for consideration of a correction application. (£90)