



British Embassy
Budapest

INFORMATIVE NOTE: NAMING CHILDREN IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

Under English law parents may give their child any forename or surname. No additional documentation is required under UK law although there is a facility for doing so through the UK courts by way of a Deed Poll.

The surname given to a child when its birth is registered in the UK is generally, but not always, that of the father. However it sometimes happens, especially in the case of persons born outside marriage, that the surnames of the parents, in any order, are hyphenated to provide a double-barrelled surname. English law places no restrictions as to what surname may be registered for a child in the UK.

The surname of a child may be changed by parents acting jointly or, after divorce, in the absence of any order of the court to the contrary, by the parent having custody of that child. If, therefore, the mother has custody of the child and remarries, she may cause the child to be known by the surname of her new husband, even though he is not the father of the child.

The information contained in this letter is general and should not be taken as a definitive statement of law.