



Changing a Student's Name in School Policy

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1. Introduction

For a number of reasons parents/carers may request schools to change the name(s) of their child(ren) on the school register, or students themselves may wish to change their name, gender or pronoun. These requests will often be well thought through and in some circumstances based upon genuine concerns.

This policy explains how we deal with requests from students or parents to change their name, gender and pronouns.

2. Definitions

At the Riverview Family of Schools (RFS), we have two ways of recording a student's name: a preferred forename and surname and a legal forename and surname.

A **preferred name** is the name you and your child prefer to be known by.

The **legal name** of a student is the one that's on their birth certificate or passport.

Gender **pronouns** are the terms people choose to refer to themselves that reflect their gender identity, for example he/she/they etc.

3. Changing a Student's Preferred Name

A preferred name is the name you and your child prefer to be known by, and the name that will appear on class registers, school reports, school email addresses etc.

A preferred name can be changed easily according to the wishes of the child and the parents/carers, and can be different from the legal name we hold on our systems. This also applies to transgender students who wish to be known by a different name in school.

A preferred name can be a different forename, a different surname, or both. To change a preferred name in school, students and parents/carers can [contact the relevant school](#). No documentation is required to change a student's preferred name and no consent is sought from those with parental responsibility to change the preferred name, but any requests from students directly will be discussed with the pastoral team and parents/carers first.

Preferred name changes should be limited to one per student for the duration of their time at schools in the RFS. If conflicts arise around this matter, then we will defer to the student's wishes as to what they want to be known by within school.

Individual schools reserve the right to make the final decision. Names that could be seen as offensive may be rejected. Please note that the preferred name will *not* be shown on official documentation from school, such as student's exam certificates, further information about this can be found below.

4. Changing a Student's Legal Name

The legal name of a student is the one that's on their birth certificate or passport, and this is normally the name we will have been provided with by the Admissions team at the Local Authority when the student starts/started at a school in the RFS.

To change the legal name of a student under 18 on their educational records, parents/carers will need to provide documentation that shows a name change through an [enrolled deed poll](#) from the Royal Courts of Justice - this will require either consent from everyone with parental responsibility for the child, or a court order.

By using an enrolled deed poll, the student's new name will usually appear on public record in [The Gazette](#), so any documentation provided to us will be checked against these records. Please note: (unenrolled) deed poll documentation from other websites, agencies and solicitors will not be accepted.

Parents/carers will need to follow this route if they'd like to have their child's new legal name to be shown on their exam certificates. It's recommended that parents/carers submit the student's name change request as soon as possible, and please be mindful that some exams take place in Year 10.

Students who are 16 or over, can legally change their own name using an [unenrolled deed poll](#), for which no parental consent is required. RFS will accept these name change requests from students directly, but parents and the pastoral team will still be notified of these requests. These legal name changes will be used to enter students for their exams with the exam boards, and those names are the ones that will be printed on the certificates. RFS will only accept one change to the student's legal name via unenrolled deed poll, so students are encouraged to consider their name changes carefully.

In order for the correct names to be printed on the exam certificates, parents and students must notify RFS of changes to legal names at least one week prior to the end of the school year, to enable the school to process the change and notify the relevant exam boards.

Exam boards are unable to amend name changes made by deed poll after the results of the exams have been issued, unless the name change is due to [gender reassignment](#). For further information about changing names of certificates, please contact the exam boards directly. Some exceptions apply for those who changed their name due to a change in gender identity.

To change a student's legal name in school, parents/carers or students who are 16 or over, should [contact the relevant school](#) to make the request, providing original documentation as stated above.

5. Change in Gender and Pronouns

RFS are supportive of students who identify themselves as a different gender than what they were assigned at birth.

We follow the DfE guidance, which states that the gender should be self-declared and recorded according to the wishes of the parent and/or pupil. Individuals are free to change the way their gender is recorded. Should a student wish to make a change to the gender we have on record for them and/or their pronouns, then this can be done by [contact the relevant school](#). The current guidance allows us to record the gender as male or female only.

In terms of pronouns, we are able to record a wide variety of those, including she/her, he/him and they/them. Other versions of pronouns will also be considered on request.

Questions surrounding toilets, changing facilities, PE lessons, school trips, exchanges and overnight stays should be addressed to the student's learning manager and will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis in consultation with the student and their family.

6. Name Change due to Gender Reassignment for Exam Certificates

Most exam boards will provide a replacement certificate free of charge after results of exams have been issued, if students have legally changed their name due to a change in their gender identity. Please contact the exam boards directly for further information using the website links below.

- AQA: [Amendments to original certificates](#)
- OCR: [Gender reassignment](#)
- Pearson and Edexcel: [Certificate services: replacement documents](#) (look under "Amendment to an original")
- WJEC: [Need a replacement certificate?](#) (look under the "Amendments to Certificates" tab)
- VTCT: [Replacement certificates](#)

7. Contacts

To change a name, gender or pronoun, or to find out more information, please contact the following department:

- Baysgarth: Data and Exams Team
- Castledyke: Reception