



ARRANGING THE CEREMONY

You can find contact details of local celebrants on our website humanistceremonies.org.uk/namings. You can then check their availability and confirm fees.

Having booked your celebrant, you will arrange to meet to discuss your ideas and what you want from the occasion. Your celebrant will produce a draft of the script with plenty of time to finalise this before the day itself. For further information, please see humanistceremonies.org.uk/namings.

You may also like to buy a copy of Humanists UK's book, *New Arrivals*. This is available from our website and includes lots of information and ideas on music and readings as well as sample ceremonies.

WORKING WITH A CELEBRANT

Humanist celebrants are warm, friendly, and professional. Calm under pressure, they are used to the unpredictability that can come with working with small children!

With a wealth of experience and lots of practical tips to share, your celebrant can give as much or as little guidance as is needed on – for example – readings, poetry, music, and how to involve people in the ceremony.

They are there to advise on all the components – big and small – that make the day so special. Together you can create an occasion that best suits you.



Humanist Ceremonies

WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO

Humanists are people who shape their own lives in the here and now, because we believe it's the only life we have. We make sense of the world through logic, reason, and evidence, and always seek to treat those around us with warmth, understanding, and respect.

Humanists UK advances free thinking and promotes humanism to create a tolerant society where rational thinking and kindness prevail. Our work brings non-religious people together to develop their own views, helping people be happier and more fulfilled in the one life we have. For over 120 years, we've been the leading provider of meaningful, personalised, non-religious ceremonies.

Humanist Ceremonies™ is the network of non-religious celebrants trained, accredited, insured, and quality-assured by Humanists UK.

We are the UK's longest standing provider of non-religious ceremonies and provide individually-prepared ceremonies to mark important occasions in life such as the arrival of a child, weddings and funerals. 98% of feedback received awards us 5/5.

Meaningful non-religious ceremonies just for you



Registered Charity No. 285987



Humanist Ceremonies

NAMINGS

THE PERFECT WELCOME



Find out more at
humanistceremonies.org.uk/namings

Humanist naming ceremonies are the perfect way to welcome your child with honesty, warmth, and affection.

The arrival of a child is a truly life-changing event.

For many of us a religious service isn't appropriate but it is still important to bring our friends and family together to mark such a special occasion.

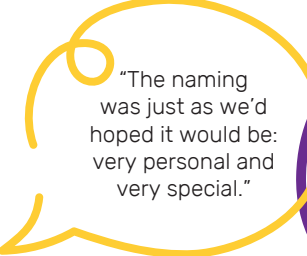
A humanist naming ceremony gives you the opportunity to reflect and acknowledge the joy, wonder and responsibility of bringing a child into the world in a way that is not religious.

They are relaxed, happy, and personal occasions. And since every ceremony is written specifically for a particular family, each one is unique.

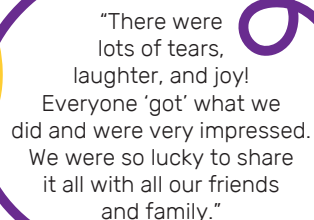
Naming ceremonies are child-centred and inclusive, and often held at the start of a celebratory party, giving a real sense of purpose to the gathering.

They are held by all sorts of people who want to mark the arrival of their child but also want their child to be able to decide for themselves, as they get older, what they do or don't believe about religion.

And since namings have no legal standing, they can be held wherever suits you best: a village hall, in hotels, at home, in the garden, at the park, perhaps even at the zoo.



"The naming was just as we'd hoped it would be: very personal and very special."



"There were lots of tears, laughter, and joy! Everyone 'got' what we did and were very impressed. We were so lucky to share it all with all our friends and family."

WHAT A CEREMONY INVOLVES

There is no set structure to be followed. It all depends on what suits you. The ceremony might be short or long, formal or relaxed, and involve many guests or just a few.

A typical ceremony might last around 20 minutes and include music, readings, or poems, and perhaps a symbolic act such as planting a tree. As parents or carers, you can express your love for your child and publicly pledge your commitment to their welfare.



EXAMPLE OF A CEREMONY

Though every humanist naming is unique, a typical ceremony might be structured as follows:

- Introductions and welcomes
- Reading or poem
- Information about the child – their arrival, personality etc.
- Words about the importance and responsibility of parenting
- Parental promises to the child
- Reading or poem
- Importance of wider family e.g. grandparents, cousins etc.
- Appointment of guideparents
- Guideparents' promises
- Reasons for the choice of name
- The naming itself (various forms possible)
- Concluding words

You can also involve other people who are close to your child. Grandparents sometimes make promises to their grandchild and many an older sibling has stolen the show with their own unique contribution to the event.

Some parents or carers choose to appoint 'guideparents' for their child, rather in the tradition of 'godparents', though they might alternatively be termed 'supporting adults', 'mentors' or even 'odd-parents' or 'sparents'! The ceremony is often brought to a close with something upbeat such as a song, blowing bubbles, or releasing balloons.

FOR FAMILIES OF ALL SHAPES AND SIZES

Although they are often called 'baby' namings or welcomings, these occasions are suitable for children of all ages. We conduct many ceremonies that are joint celebrations of first birthdays, for example, as well as combined namings for siblings, cousins, twins, and more.

And the naming welcoming ceremony approach can be adapted to suit different circumstances. We have created ceremonies to mark the blending of a new step-family, to formally welcome adopted children and to mark a coming of age.

Namings are also sometimes combined with humanist wedding ceremonies and some unmarried couples use the occasion of their child's naming to make commitments to each other.

