**Naming Ceremony**

*Option to play music as your guests wait for your ceremony to begin (approx. 15 minutes). Music can be live (for example you could make arrangements for a small choir or soloist to sing, a string quartet to play or a harpist to perform) or recorded. You may like to select songs which have special meaning to you as a parent, or music which is significant to your child, such as their favourite lullabies or instrumental versions of nursery rhymes or TV shows they enjoy.*

Registrar announces start of ceremony.

*Would you like to enter the ceremony room with your child to a particular piece of music or would you prefer to begin the ceremony more informally?*

Good morning/afternoon everyone*.* My name is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and I am the Deputy Superintendent Registrar, of the City of Westminster. I have the privilege of conducting todays naming ceremony, alongside my colleague \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ who will be making a commemorative record of this event.

On behalf of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ *(parents)*, and of course \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ *(child)*, I would like to welcome you all here to share their special day with them.

Almost all cultures have ceremonies to mark the important stages of our lives. Such celebrations generate a bond between all those who participate: they enable us to define new roles and to acknowledge new relationships and new responsibilities. They

mark a person’s transition through life stages and highlight the values and beliefs important to us.

Today’s celebration offers the ritual of formally naming \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ *(child)* and welcoming him/herinto our community. As members and friends of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ *(child)* family, today is also an opportunity for you to consider ways in which your relationship with him/her can provide the love and guidance that will strengthen his/her character and help to define him/her as an adult.

*Suitable place for a reading (suggested length 3 minutes or less). This could be a favourite childhood poem, extract from a book, quote or song lyrics about childhood, or poem written especially for the day about your child.*

As we celebrate \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ *(child)* naming day it is a joy to see that he/she is treasured by so many. Today we honour and acknowledge the love between \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ *(child)* and his parents (and siblings), but also the bond between \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ *(child)* and other important people in his/her life, such as… *Please elaborate on those whose relationship with your child you would particularly like to honour. For example, “… his much adored Auntie D and Uncle E; his cousins and partners in crime F and G; and his fantastic foster parents, H and I who have travelled from Manchester to be here on this special day.”*

*Suitable place to incorporate up to two paragraphs summarising your journey to parenthood/the blending of your family and the highlights of your life as a family unit so far. For example, “Becoming parents to A has been the greatest joy of B & C’s lives. Today marks the end of a very long journey for them as a family and it is in recognition of this, and of the happiness that they have found together, that we are all here today.”*

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ *(parents)*, I ask you now to please bring forward \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ *(child)* and confirm his/her given names.

*(One parent states child’s first and middle names)*

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ *(child’s first and middle names)* you are welcomed today by your family and friends gathered here in your honour. It is with much joy that I formally announce the names chosen for you. *Please elaborate on your reasons for selecting your child’s names. For example, “As many of you will know, A’s first name was chosen because it means ‘bravery’, a quality that A has shown in abundance since his two months premature arrival into the world. A’s middle name, W, is a family name on his father’s side handed down from his great-great-grandfather.*”

*Option to include a Sand Ceremony*

*Please provide two or more glass vials each containing a different coloured sand (number dependant on how many people you would like involved in the ceremony, maximum of six) and an additional larger glass vial with stopper capable of holding all the sand. Symbolism of different coloured sands:*

*Black = strength and protection. Blue = loyalty and harmony. Brown = devotion and the blending of families. Green = health and luck. Grey = patience and understanding. Orange = contentment and safety. Pink = love and happiness. Purple = strength and support. Red = passion and perseverance. White = co-operation and independence. Yellow = friendship and joy.*

Today we acknowledge the happiness and fulfilment that \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ *(child)* has brought to his/her family, in the form of a sand ceremony. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ *(parents)*, relationship with \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ *(child)* will be symbolised through the pouring of these three individual vials of sand into one, as a visual representation that just as the different coloured sands can never be separated, the bond of love they share can never be divided.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ *(parents)*, I ask you now in turn to pour your sand into this larger container.

(At this time, I would like to invite siblings/grandparents to come forward to add their sand.)

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ *(parents)*, together I ask you to now honour \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ *(child)* by pouring his/her vial of sand.

As a family you have created this unique keepsake of today’s celebration. May it be a treasured reminder of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ *(child)* naming day and of the love that binds you. *(Please remember to bring a box and bubble wrap to protect your glassware.)*

*Suitable place for a second reading (suggested length 3 minutes or less).*

Today’s ceremony is a time for \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ *(parents)* to declare their lifelong intent to be loving supportive parents to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ *(child);* and for us to recognise special people who similarly intend to always be there for \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ *(child)* and act as his/her guide parents.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ *(parents)*, do you promise to bring\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ *(child*) up in a home filled with love and kindness; and to instill in him/her the values to become a kind and empathetic person?

*Answer: I do*

And do you promise to always support \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ *(child)* in all that he/she does, and to forever be there for him/her to turn to whenever he/she needs you*?*

*Answer: I do*

*Option to include personal promises to child and wishes for their future, written by parents (and siblings).*

If I could now invite forward \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ *(child)* guide parents, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ *(guide parents)*, do you gladly accept the responsibility of acting as \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ *(child)* guide parent; and do you promise to offer your support and assistance to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ *(parents)* whilst they raise \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ *(child)?*

*Answer: I do*

And do you promise to keep careful watch over \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ *(child)*  until he/she grows to be an adult and to be always ready to advise, encourage and comfort him/her?

*Answer: I do*

*Option to include personal promises to child and wishes for their future, written by guide parents.*

If I could ask you all now to please confirm these promises by signing the record of this happy event.

*Option to play music as commemorative certificate is signed by parents and guide parents (approx. 5 mins)*

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ *(parents)*, we hope that as a family you will think back on today often and share memories of this special occasion. It is with the greatest of pleasure that I now present the commemorative record of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ *(child)* naming day.

Ladies and Gentleman, please join me in a round of applause for the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (surname) family - \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ *(parents)*, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ *(sibling/s)* and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ *(child)*!

*Registrar’s final words of well wishes and presentation of a commemorative naming ceremony certificate.*

*Option to play a final song as you and your child exit the ceremony room, followed by your guests.*