



Diocese of Peterborough

Communion before Confirmation – a discussion document for parishes

The Diocesan policy is administered by the Bishop, whose specific agreement is necessary before the practice is introduced in any one parish. Each PCC, or group of PCCs, should apply by completing and submitting the attached application form. The Bishop may wish to discuss the application with the parish priest.

It is suggested that PCCs obtain a copy of 2 helpful Powerpoint presentations 'Children and Communion' and 'Children's Voices' from the Children's Missioner to assist their discussions and decision-making. This can be either in paper or electronic form.

In multi-parish benefices it is not necessary for every PCC to agree in this matter, but any parish that decides not to apply for permission must remember that any communicant child duly admitted, as a communicant child under this procedure, must be received in all parishes of the diocese and throughout the Church of England.

Registration

A hardbacked register should be used to record the names, addresses, dates of birth, and the dates of baptism and admission to communion. This will save repetition at the time of confirmation and provide successors with clear information with regard to the communicant status of children and young people in the parish. A certificate of admission should be given to each person admitted. A sample certificate and a sample page for the register is attached.

Confirmation

It is understood that people admitted to communion before confirmation will usually, in due course, proceed to confirmation. It is expected that 'children' will proceed to confirmation by the age of 18. Confirmation completes the initiation process. For adults, confirmation will normally follow shortly afterwards. Only those baptised may be admitted to communion.

Preparation

Each parish or benefice must provide appropriate preparation suitable to the age and understanding of those wishing to receive. The Bishop will wish to see evidence of this provision when the parish makes its application. The Children's Missioner can suggest different courses of preparation.

Admission

The day of admission should be decided and publicised in advance. A clear announcement should be made at the start of the actual service or whenever the notices are given. Parishes may like to use "Admission of the Baptized to Communion on page 188 of Common Worship Christian. The Bishop will not make decisions about individuals although he is always ready to be consulted.

Nurture

Each parish applying must make arrangements for the continuing nurture of those admitted to communion under this scheme. The Bishop will wish to see evidence of this provision when the parish makes its application. It should not be assumed that everyone will be supported in their faith development by their family.

School Eucharists

The expectation of the Bishop, along with the National Society, is that the Eucharist will be regularly celebrated in all church schools, with appropriate and ongoing teaching. The parish priest, *in consultation with the headteacher and foundation governors*, must decide whom, within the school community, may be invited to receive the Holy Communion. The Diocesan Board of Education can provide guidance on this.

January 2008



Admission of baptised children to Holy Communion

Step by step

- Open the discussion with the PCC, having done some initial research, referring to recent reports and Diocesan Advisers, if necessary
- Consult with the congregation, perhaps through an open meeting. It may be helpful to use the Powerpoint presentations, 'Children's Voices' and 'Communion before Confirmation', available from the Children's Missioner
- After further discussion, the PCC makes a decision as to whether to proceed further
- Feedback the decision to the congregation
- If proceeding, consult with children's leaders about a preparation programme
- Identify leaders for the preparation course
- Consider the implications for the pattern of services, liturgy and participation of all ages (*those receiving communion may have a separate Liturgy of the Word, but all should be present in the main assembly for at least the Eucharistic prayer*)
- Approach the Bishop for permission to proceed, and complete the application form which outlines the process followed so far, and the pattern of preparation and continuing nurture which will be followed
- Communicate the arrangements to the congregation
- In consultation with parents and children's leaders, invite children to consider receiving communion – it should not just be 'the next thing to do'
(NB baptism is a pre-requisite– you will need to check this with families)
- Deliver the preparation course, encouraging parents (and sponsors where possible) to be involved
- Arrange a service at which children will receive Holy Communion for the first time
(*this will become a regular event*)
- A register must be kept of the names of children admitted to communion. If possible their baptism certificate should be endorsed. They should also be given the Diocesan Admission to Communion certificate.
- Write letters of commendation for any children moving to a new parish
- Review the procedures and preparation regularly
- It is expected that 'children' will be presented for confirmation by the age of 18

Bibliography:

Let the Children come to Communion Stephen Lake, SPCK ISBN: 9780281057955
Welcome to the Lord's Table Margaret Withers, barnabas ISBN 978184 015040
Connecting with Baptism Mark Earey (ed), CHP ISBN 97807151 41106



DIOCESE OF PETERBOROUGH

Admission of Baptised Persons to Holy Communion before Confirmation

Parish Application Form

Parish(es)

Deanery

Priest

Consultation

Has the PCC discussed this subject in the light of the General Synod Regulations? Yes/No

What was the outcome?

How has the wider congregation been involved in the discussion?

What was the outcome?

What other guidance or advice has been sought (if any)?

Preparation

How will the preparation of the children for Holy Communion be organised?

Who will lead the preparation, and what training will they be given?

What teaching materials will be used?

How will the children's nurture towards Confirmation continue after they have been admitted to Holy Communion?

Pastoral Matters

How will parents be involved in the preparation of their children for Holy Communion?

What strategy do you have for families who do not wish for their children to be admitted to Holy Communion?

What strategy do you have for children who come to church without their parents?

What provision will be made for the nurture of children with learning difficulties who wish to receive Holy Communion?

How will children be involved and affirmed as members of the Christian community:

within the Eucharist?

in non-Eucharistic worship?

in social events?

The admission to Holy Communion service

The General Synod regulations require that 'first communion' should be marked in some way appropriate to the life of the parish. Please give information about:

the Service (*please attach details*)

the Certificate of Admission

the Register

Signed:.....(Priest) Date.....

Please return this form to the Bishop

I confirm that the parish of
may admit baptised persons to Holy Communion before Confirmation.

Signed:..... Date

Lord Bishop of Peterborough

DIOCESE OF PETERBOROUGH



Date.....

Parish(es)

By permission of the Lord Bishop of Peterborough and in accordance with the Holy Communion Regulations 2006

(Name of Communicant).....

is admitted to Holy Communion prior to Confirmation

.....
(Priest's Signature)

.....
(Date)

(Name of Communicant).....

was baptised on*(date)*

was confirmed on*(date)*



Sample page of details required for Register of Admission to Communion

Date of Admission to Communion:

Name and Address:

Date of Birth:

Date & details of Baptism: