

COMMUNION BEFORE CONFIRMATION

PARISH POLICY OF ALL SAINTS WOKINGHAM

Admission to the Holy Communion should arise out of a person's faith development and not be simply a response to parental or peer pressure. In considering a person's admission the following guidelines should be observed.

1. Qualifications for receiving Holy Communion

1.1 Chronological age should not be a determining factor. Children should be considered for admission when they and their parents think they are ready.

1.2 The person must have been baptised and evidence of baptism produced.

1.3 In the case of a child parental consent must be obtained.

1.4 Normally at least one of a child's parents should be a regular communicant. However, if neither is, a child who attends church regularly may be admitted if a suitable sponsor can be found. Parental consent to this arrangement is required.

1.5 A register will be kept of those admitted to the Holy Communion, and they will receive a certificate (or an endorsement of their Certificate of Baptism).

1.6 The decision to admit a person to the Holy Communion will rest with the Rector, after consultation with those responsible for their preparation and, where applicable, their parents.

1.7 Those once admitted to the Holy Communion must not anywhere in the Church of England be excluded from it. They should therefore be provided with a letter explaining their communicant status, if they move to another parish.

2 Preparation

2.1 Children wishing to receive Holy Communion will receive preparation in a form approved by the Rector.

2.2 Parents and sponsors will be involved in this preparation in an appropriate way.

2.3 The spiritual nurture of all children at All Saints will be fostered particularly through the activities of the Junior Church taking place at the same time as the Ministry of the Word

section of the Parish Communion.

For a general core course of Christian nurture it is intended to use material from ‘Roots — worship and learning for the whole church (a lectionary approach)’ and The Good News Bible. For more specific teaching on Baptism, the Holy Communion, the story of the Last Supper, the concept of forgiveness and the grace of the Holy Spirit it is intended to use material from “Come and join the Celebration” by John Muir and Betty Pedley. Other material is likely to be drawn from “Faith Confirmed” by Peter Jackson and Chris Wright.

The teaching will be continuous and will be kept under regular review. Suitable training will be provided for Junior Church staff. A parent—friendly leaflet will be produced drawing on “Children and Spirituality” published by the Mothers Union. This will stress that signs of understanding and desire on the part of the child are important criteria if they are to proceed to the communion.

2.4 It will be expected that children admitted to the Holy Communion will continue to take part in the church’s programme of teaching and nurture.

2.5 The case of adults wishing to receive Holy Communion is covered in paragraph 4.4

3 Implications for Worship

3.1 It will be made clear to the parish that children are welcome to receive Holy Communion whenever it is celebrated.

3.2 Children who attend Junior Church will join the Communion service before the Eucharistic Prayer.

3.3 Children will normally receive communion with their parents or sponsor.

4 Confirmation

4.1 Confirmation will be presented as the occasion on which people make their own mature profession of faith.

4.2 There will be no fixed age for being confirmed; it will depend on the candidate’s desire for it.

4.3 A young person who has been admitted to the Holy Communion and has not sought confirmation by the age of sixteen will be encouraged to consider it, but will in any case continue to be welcome to receive.

4.4 Adults wishing to receive the Holy Communion before being confirmed will be welcome to do so after conversation with the clergy, but will be encouraged to seek confirmation.

- 4.5 Baptised people with learning difficulties will be offered preparation suitable for their needs and welcomed at the Holy Communion.
- 4.6 Baptised communicants from other churches are welcome to receive communion in our church. If they intend to do so on a regular basis, those who have been episcopally confirmed will be encouraged to be received into the Church of England; those who have not will be encouraged to seek confirmation.

This policy was approved by the Bishop of Reading in July 2002 and adopted by the Parochial Church Council of Wokingham All Saints in September 2002.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'D Hodgson', is positioned to the left of a vertical dashed line.

The Reverend Canon David Hodgson,
Rector, Wokingham All Saints.