

Admitting Children to Holy Communion before Confirmation

Guidelines for parishes

Revised January 2007

Contents

Introduction	3
Bishop's Direction	3
Guidelines for the Diocese of Chester	4
The process for parishes	5
Some questions people may ask	6
Preparing the children	8
Involving parents, children's leaders and the wider congregation	10
The service of Admission to Holy Communion	11
Planning Holy Communion services which include children	11
Implications for parishes with church schools	12
Appendix 1: General Synod Regulations 2006	13
Appendix 2: Resources	15
Appendix 3: The rite for Admission of children to Holy Communion before Confirmation	17
Appendix 4: Certificate of Admission to Holy Communion	18
Appendix 5: Form to request permission to change parish practice	19

Introduction

For most of us, our experience of initiation into the Church of England has been one which follows the pattern of Baptism, and Confirmation followed by admission to Holy Communion. However, in recent years, there has been much debate about this pattern.

Factors which have contributed towards such questioning include the growth in the parish Communion movement when increasingly children have been present at the giving of Communion; developments in thinking about the place of children in our churches; a greater emphasis on lifelong formation of faith; and some readdressing of our understanding of Baptism and its relationship to Confirmation.

In 1997, the House of Bishops produced Guidelines under which dioceses could allow baptised persons to be admitted to Holy Communion before Confirmation. In the Diocese of Chester, Bishop Peter issued an Ad Clerum in October 2000 opening the way for parishes to seek permission to adopt this policy for children aged eight and over. This followed the report of a working group and debates in Diocesan Synod, Deanery Synods and some PCCs. In 2006, General Synod agreed new Regulations for Admission of Baptised Children to Holy Communion. These supersede the previous Guidelines.

This booklet has been revised to take into account the new Regulations along with feedback from churches on the first edition. Its purpose is to help parishes as they consider whether to change their practice. It does not cover all the arguments for and against such a move. We have also produced a shorter guide which churches can use to engage a wider group of people in their discussions. Further resources are available to borrow from Church House along with copies of the diocesan Working Group's report which covers more of the theological and historical background.

Our hope and prayer for each parish is that considering this issue will help you to develop and strengthen your nurture of children as they grow in knowing and loving God.

For further help, please contact the Diocesan Adviser for Ministry among Children, Church House, 5500 Daresbury Park, Warrington, WA4 4GE 01928-718834 (Ext 226)

Bishop's Direction

In accordance with regulation 3 of the Admission of Baptised Children to Holy Communion Regulations 2006, I, Peter, Bishop of Chester hereby direct that from this date parishes in the Diocese of Chester may make applications under the said Regulations.

Guidelines for the Diocese of Chester

Before parishes can admit children to Holy Communion before Confirmation they must have the permission of the relevant Suffragan Bishop.

Permission

Before giving permission for a parish to admit children to Holy Communion before Confirmation, the Bishop will need to be satisfied that:

- there has been wide and significant discussion in the parish about the issue
- there is agreement within the PCC for such a change to take place
- the parish will comply with the Admissions of Baptised Children to Holy Communion Regulations 2006 (see Appendix 1)
- children to be admitted will take part in a suitable preparation course. This should be part of a continuing programme for the education and nurture of children and their families from baptism, through the welcoming of children to Holy Communion and on to Confirmation and beyond.

The process of discernment

Before a child can be admitted to Holy Communion before Confirmation, the incumbent must be satisfied that:

- the child has been baptised
- the child wants to be admitted
- normally, the child will be at least eight years of age at the time of Admission
- the child has normally been a regular member of a nurture group and/or has attended church regularly for at least a year
- a person with parental responsibility is content that the child should be admitted.

The pattern for Admission

- The service which marks admission to Holy Communion will be conducted by the parish priest.
- Either the Common Worship liturgy 'Admission of the Baptized to Communion' (Christian Initiation volume) or the Diocese's own liturgy (Appendix 3) must be used.
- The parish must keep a register of all those who have been admitted to Holy Communion before Confirmation. (This register is covered by the Parochial Registers and Records Measure 1978).
- Each child's baptism certificate should be endorsed with the words '*Admitted to Holy Communion by me*', and signed and dated by the Incumbent. In the absence of a baptism certificate, a certificate of admission should be given. An example is given in Appendix 4.

Children visiting or moving to other parishes

Once a child has been admitted to Holy Communion in one parish, the Regulations state that they are entitled to receive in any parish, whether or not that parish has itself gained permission to admit children. This also applies to children admitted to Holy Communion in other dioceses. Parishes should be aware that in some dioceses there is a lower age limit or none. Any incumbent or parish with concerns on this matter should contact their Suffragan Bishop.

Confirmation

Confirmation marks the important moment when baptised members of the Church take public responsibility for their baptismal status. It is important that admission to Holy Communion before Confirmation is seen as a stage of Christian nurture which leads later to Confirmation.

The process for parishes

1. Every parish should have a clear strategy for its ministry among children. Exploring the possibility of admitting children to Holy Communion is an opportunity to review this strategy – or to start putting one in place. The process of engaging the wider congregation in considering the nature of children’s faith and their place with the church should be of great value, whatever policy you decide to adopt. The Gospels record Jesus’ welcome to children and his encouragement to them to come to him. The church needs to reflect this invitation.

2. Consultation should be as wide as possible within your parish and should include PCC members, parents, children’s leaders, the wider congregation, the children themselves and, where appropriate, local ecumenical partners and church schools. You can distribute the leaflet *Admitting Children to Holy Communion: a short guide* to provide the basic information. It may be appropriate to ask an individual or working group to coordinate the consultation process. Any meetings should be carefully planned and chaired to allow a range of views to be heard. Your discussions might relate to the following areas:

- the meaning of Baptism, Holy Communion and Confirmation
- Biblical understandings of children and faith
- the historical tradition
- how we nurture people, including children, in the Christian faith
- being part of the church community
- any issues of practice for your parish.

3. Please inform the Diocesan Adviser for Ministry among Children that you are beginning the consultation process in your parish. You will then be able to arrange for any support or advice that you need.

4. The issue must be debated at a PCC meeting taking into account the responses of the various groups consulted. While not all PCC members may have read all of this document, it is important that they should read the ‘Guidelines for the Diocese of Chester’ on page 4 (which are also provided in the ‘Short Guide’).

The PCC can then vote on a motion such as the following:

‘The PCC of hereby resolve to request the Bishop of for permission to admit children to Holy Communion before Confirmation under the Admission of Baptised Children to Holy Communion Regulations 2006.’

5. If the decision is made to proceed, you should then complete the ‘Request for Permission’ form (Appendix 5) and return it to the Suffragan Bishop. If permission is subsequently given, the decision and the planned arrangements should be communicated as widely as possible within your parish. Make sure you include parents of younger children so that they know what will be happening in the future. If, for any reason, permission is not given, the PCC will need to consider its next step, depending on the reasons given.

If the PCC decides not to request permission to admit children this too should be widely communicated.

Some questions people may ask

Some parents, who are themselves very committed in their faith, have chosen not to have their children baptised, preferring that to be a decision the child makes for her/himself. If children have to be baptised before they can be admitted to Holy Communion, this would exclude such children. How do we respond to them?

The Regulations clearly state that baptism is a pre-requisite for admission to Holy Communion. Discussion should therefore take place between the incumbent, parents and the child. If the child wants to be admitted to Holy Communion, this might reflect a step in their personal journey of faith and commitment. This might be an appropriate time for the child to be baptised.

We have a lot of children in our church who come up to the rail for a blessing. How will the vicar know who has been admitted to Holy Communion and who has not?

Admission to Holy Communion is a formal process. A record must be kept of the children who are prepared and admitted. This means that the vicar will know which children can receive Communion. Even so, there is a responsibility on the part of all those who are involved in administering Communion to get to know the children who will be admitted. It can also help if there is a recognised cue to be given by those who come to the rail to indicate whether they are to receive Communion or a blessing.

Within our 8–11s group, we could have some children who will be admitted to Communion and some who won't. We are concerned that those who have not been admitted may feel 'second class'.

There are a number of reasons why a child might not be admitted to Communion at the same time as others of the same age: their own or their parent's wishes, their not being baptised or having only recently starting coming to the group or church. It is important to talk openly with children about the reasons. Children do live with difference as part of their lives and difference need not correspond with worth. There should be many other ways in which all children experience that they are valued members of the group and church.

Will children of this age really understand what Holy Communion is about?

It is important that children's participation in Holy Communion is seen in the context of their growing and developing faith. Very young children are able to understand something of the meaning of Holy Communion in a way appropriate to their development. At the same time, none of us can claim full understanding.

As children grow, they should be learning about God's grace and being given opportunities to respond, whether through their families, children's groups or elsewhere in the life of the church. As part of this, joining in Holy Communion can be an opportunity for them, along with others of all ages, to hear repeated the story of God's grace and to join in responding to it. Those leading services will need to think and consult about how to do this in a way which will be meaningful for adults and children together.

Will the children take it seriously and reverently?

The experience of churches which have admitted children to Holy Communion has been that children do take it seriously. Those churches which have reported back, speak positively about the contribution children have made. Children are not just bouncy and noisy. They can express their response to God in awe, wonder, silence and prayer too. It will help them to focus if they sit with their families or in small groups with an adult. Ensure that children are seated where they can see and can feel part of what is happening.

We have many children aged 8 and over who have not been confirmed. The first time we admit to Communion there could be a large number of them. How should we handle that?

If you are in a church with a lot of children, it is especially good to do the preparation course in smaller groups – ideally not larger than 8. If the preparation groups are too large, they can lose a sense of fellowship, and less confident children may participate less. You may decide to stagger the preparation groups and have more than one service of admission at first to help make this possible.

Why has the age of 8 been decided?

Children of this age can begin to own their faith for themselves. They can have a strong and trusting faith and they take promises very seriously. Admitting children to communion at 8 can celebrate and affirm God's love for them and their response of love and trust in him.

While views on age limits vary between dioceses and within parishes, admitting children from the age of 8 provides a workable structure. It creates an opportunity to mark and celebrate a significant stage in a child's journey between Baptism and Confirmation.

Will Confirmation seem less important to young people if we make this change?

It can be an opportunity for you to make clearer the value and seriousness of Confirmation as a personal affirmation of faith. Take the opportunity to revisit your Confirmation preparation and to think again about the best ways for the wider church to support young people and adults as they take this step.

Preparing the children

Aims

- The purpose of the preparation course is to help children to develop an understanding of Holy Communion appropriate to their age and abilities, so they can participate in it meaningfully. This will include exploring something of the significance of Communion and the elements of the Communion service. This needs to be understood as part of a developing understanding of Communion as a lifelong process in which our understanding can only ever be partial.
- Exploring Holy Communion with children will mean looking at some of the central elements of our faith, such as the person of Jesus, his death and resurrection and our response to him. However, it should not become like a junior confirmation course. The broad spread of learning and growth should come within the setting of your regular children's nurture programme.
- Think how you want children to learn about Communion from whenever they first start coming to the church service or children's group. They can learn from the experience of being present in Communion services, and by being encouraged to participate in appropriate ways. Teaching about the Holy Communion should be included in the regular curriculum of the children's group.

Leadership

Leaders for the preparation need to be both skilled in exploring faith with children and appreciative of why children are being admitted to Holy Communion. They may be clergy, readers, children's leaders or others experienced in working with children. There should be at least two adults involved in the sessions. They must have current CRB disclosure certificates and comply with the parish's Child Protection Policy.

Take particular care if only one child is being prepared. You still need to follow your Child Protection Policy. However, it could be intimidating for two adults to be involved in the preparation. You could ask a parent or an adult supporter to be present rather than a second leader or meet on church premises within sight of other children and adults engaged in other activities.

Timing

The sessions can happen either at the same time as a regular children's group or at another specially arranged time:

Sunday morning/regular time

This may work if everyone in the 8+ group is involved in the preparation. Otherwise the needs of the others need to be considered. It may seem to assume that everyone will be admitted, diminishing the element of decision making.

Alternative time

If you can find an alternative time, it will give greater flexibility with the length and venue for the sessions. It will also enable any choir members to be involved without missing the morning service.

Programmes

A typical course might be as follows:

- around 6 sessions
- each session 40–60 minutes long
- including a variety of activities: a 'warm-up' to engage the children's attention, some instruction, exploring a Bible passage, prayer and other responses to what has been learned
- involving being present at Communion services and talking about this
- dealing with the practicalities, e.g. having a taste of the kind of bread and wine used.

It can be very valuable for the children to have some way of recording and keeping the work done during the preparation programme, e.g. simple folders. Some published schemes have linked children's books. The children could also make their own Communion Service books to use (photocopiable sheets for this are available from the Children's Work resource base at Church House).

Resources

There are a number of published preparation programmes available; some are included in Appendix 2. We have copies of a number of programmes available to borrow for up to four weeks from the Children's Work resource base at Church House. Alternatively, you may decide to devise your own preparation programme. If you use a published scheme look critically at it before you make a final decision. Be willing to adapt it to make it appropriate to your church and setting.

Take into account the maturity and abilities of the children concerned. You may have some younger teenagers or children with special needs who wish to be admitted to Communion. For further advice on appropriate material, contact the Diocesan Children's or Youth Advisers or the Disability Adviser.

Evaluation

After the service of Admission, involve the course leaders, children and parents in evaluating the preparation. Use this to help plan for the future. You could also use this group to evaluate the Holy Communion services at which children are included.

Involving parents

Ideally, the nurture of a child in the Christian faith should be a partnership between God, the child, the parents/family and the church. Parents or those with parental responsibility must be consulted if their children are considering being admitted to Communion and the significance of the step must be explained. Someone with parental responsibility must give their permission.

You will need to decide the degree of support which you wish, or expect, parents to give during the preparation. You may want a parent to be involved in all the sessions or some of them (e.g. the first and last). This can help build up family relationships and family faith. However, some children may be less forthcoming if their parents are present.

It can be helpful to have a meeting for parents/family members and children together prior to the preparation programme. This is an opportunity to explain something of the programme and what involvement you are looking for. Parents and children can also ask questions. It is helpful to give parents a summary of the material you will cover in the preparation sessions. Some of the published material includes this as part of the package.

As children consider whether they wish to be admitted to Communion, this may raise issues for parents about their own faith. Clergy or others could use this opportunity to talk with parents or to invite them to an appropriate group or course of their own.

Involving children's and youth leaders

Consult any children's and youth leaders in planning your policy and how the children will be prepared. Recognise their responsibility as those who nurture these children and young people week by week. Make use of their expertise and concern for the children. Work with them to see how the preparation will relate to their continuing programme.

The Regulations require churches admitting children to Communion to provide for their continuing nurture in the Christian life. You may decide to use this opportunity to review your nurture of children and young people as a whole. This might include children's and young people's groups and activities, encouraging regular Bible reading and prayer, using diocesan youth events and other residential activities, and helping children and young people participate in the wider life and worship of the congregation. Any children's and young people's leaders will be an important part of this review. You may also want to consult the Diocesan Children's and Youth Officers.

Involving the wider congregation

At baptism the whole congregation takes responsibility for the nurture of children's faith. The responsibility continues through this step of the journey and is expressed in the service of Admission which takes place in a main Sunday service.

The children could be introduced to the congregation by name at the beginning of the preparation programme. Encourage the whole congregation to pray for them during the preparation course through the intercessions and any other means you use to share prayer needs.

Members of the church could be sponsors for individual children, undertaking to pray for them during the time of preparation and after Admission. Be aware of the child protection implications of this and make sure that children and adults are not put in vulnerable positions.

The service of Admission to Holy Communion

- The service which marks Admission to Holy Communion is conducted by the parish priest and takes place in a main Sunday morning Communion service. To avoid confusion it should not be part of a Confirmation service. Some churches make it an annual part of their programme at a particular festival. Others admit children as they become eligible.
- Either the liturgy in Common Worship: Christian Initiation or the rite authorised by Chester Diocese should be used (Appendix 3). The diocesan liturgy can be used just before the intercessions which can then begin with appropriate prayers for the children.
- The service will be very special for the children admitted. It can be planned creatively so that the rite of Admission is not just an extra part added in. The children being admitted can be involved in parts of the service, e.g. Bible readings, prayers, choosing some of the music or interviews in which they have the opportunity to say something of their own faith. They could be the first to receive Communion at the invitation. Parents and Godparents should be invited to the service. It may also be appropriate to invite the children's teachers.
- The service could involve the children making a symbolic connection with their Baptism e.g. they could each dip a finger in the water in the font and make the sign of the cross on their forehead; they could hold a lighted candle at an appropriate point, perhaps the one given to them at Baptism. You may wish to include a renewal of baptismal vows for all present, perhaps in place of the creed.
- Other children from the children's group should also be present. Take this into account in planning the service, e.g. giving a short sermon involving story and/or visuals, having a short creedal statement, omitting optional elements of the service.
- You could present each child with a card and/or gift from the church.

Planning Holy Communion services which include children

Children who have been admitted to Holy Communion should be encouraged to receive Communion at least once a month. If children are to receive Communion they should be present in church from at least the Peace. Some churches have developed a monthly all-age Communion service. Others have the Ministry of the Word with children in one or more separate groups and then all join together for the Ministry of the Sacrament. (Younger children may still join the service at a later point if that is preferred.) A separate Ministry of the Word may, in effect, be the regular children's group time, perhaps shortened. It should include a time for hearing and exploring a Bible passage (perhaps from one of the lectionary readings) with prayer including some form of confession.

Consider the following ways of helping children and adults to engage as fully as possible with services of Holy Communion:

- Choose the most accessible liturgy available and adapt it to those who will make up the congregation within the limits allowed. Think about what can be added, omitted or moved.
- Include brief explanatory phrases to help guide everyone through the service.
- Involve children and young people in visible roles within the service as well as adults.
- Involve children's leaders, parents and adults the children know in visible roles.
- Think how to enhance the service by using different senses, symbolic actions or simple activities – perhaps just one or two within each service.
- Some useful resources are listed in Appendix 2.

Implications for parishes with church schools

It has been the tradition in some parishes which have a church school to confirm some, perhaps many, of the children who are in Year 6. In some church primary schools there is a tradition of 'school Eucharists' in which those who have been confirmed, children and adults, receive Communion. Where such a parish changes to a pattern of admitting children to Communion from the age of 8 this will have implications for the schools.

- ♦ It is important to consult with the school and keep them in touch with the decisions made in the parish.
- ♦ Whilst it may be appropriate for the school to work with the parish church in publicising forthcoming preparation for Admission to Communion, the criteria for Admission, as set out in the Diocesan Guidelines must be made clear. Attendance at a church school is not, by itself, acceptable as appropriate for the discernment process as outlined in the guidelines.
- ♦ A church school may include children from parishes with different policies. Children must only receive Communion if they are authorised within their own parish.

GENERAL SYNOD

**ADMISSION OF BAPTISED CHILDREN TO HOLY COMMUNION
REGULATIONS 2006**

The General Synod hereby makes the following Regulations under paragraph 1(c) of Canon B15A:-

1. These Regulations may be cited as the Admission of Baptised Children to Holy Communion Regulations 2006 and shall come into force on such day as the Archbishops of Canterbury and York may jointly appoint.
2. Children who have been baptised but who have not yet been confirmed and who are not yet ready and desirous to be confirmed as required by paragraph 1(a) of Canon B15A may be admitted to Holy Communion provided that the conditions set out in these Regulations are satisfied.
3. Every diocesan bishop may at any time make a direction to the effect that applications from parishes under these Regulations may be made in his diocese. The bishop's discretion in this respect shall be absolute, and he may at any time revoke such a direction (without prejudice to the validity of any permissions already granted thereunder).
4. Where a direction under paragraph 3 is in force in a diocese, an incumbent may apply to the bishop for permission that children falling within the definition in paragraph 2 may be admitted to Holy Communion in one or more of the parishes in the incumbent's charge. Such application must be made in writing and must be accompanied by a copy of a resolution in support of the application passed by the parochial church council of each parish in respect of which the application is made.
5. Before granting any permission under paragraph 4, the bishop must first satisfy himself (a) that the parish concerned has made adequate provision for preparation and continuing nurture in the Christian life and will encourage any child admitted to Holy Communion under these Regulations to be confirmed at the appropriate time and (b) where the parish concerned is within the area of a local ecumenical project established under Canon B 44, that the other participating Churches have been consulted.
6. The bishop's decision in relation to any application under paragraph 4 shall be final, but a refusal shall not prevent a further application being made on behalf of the parish concerned, provided that at least one year has elapsed since the most recent previous application was refused.
7. Any permission granted under paragraph 4 shall remain in force unless and until revoked by the bishop. The bishop must revoke such permission upon receipt of an application for the purpose made by the incumbent. Such application must be made in writing and accompanied by a copy of a resolution in support of the application passed by the parochial church council of each parish in respect of which the application is made. Otherwise, the bishop may only revoke a permission granted under paragraph 4 if he considers that the conditions specified in paragraph 5 are no longer being satisfactorily discharged. Before revoking any permission on these grounds, the bishop shall first notify the incumbent of his concerns in writing and shall

afford the incumbent a reasonable time to respond and, where appropriate, to take remedial action.

8. Where a permission granted under paragraph 4 is in force, the incumbent shall not admit any child to Holy Communion unless he or she is satisfied that (a) the child has been baptised and (b) a person having parental responsibility for the child is content that the child should be so admitted. Otherwise, subject to any direction of the bishop, it is within the incumbent's absolute discretion to decide whether, and if so when, any child should first be admitted to Holy Communion.
9. The incumbent shall maintain a register of all children admitted to Holy Communion under these Regulations, and where practicable will record on the child's baptismal certificate the date and place of the child's first admission. If the baptismal certificate is not available, the incumbent shall present the child with a separate certificate recording the same details.
10. A child who presents evidence in the form stipulated in paragraph 9 that he or she has been admitted to Holy Communion under these Regulations shall be so admitted at any service of Holy Communion conducted according to the rites of the Church of England in any place, regardless of whether or not any permission under paragraph 4 is in force in that place or was in force in that place until revoked.
11. These Regulations shall apply to a cathedral as if it were a parish, with the modifications that:
 - (a) any application under paragraphs 3 or 7 must be made by the dean of the cathedral concerned, accompanied by a copy of a resolution in support of the application passed by the chapter of the cathedral concerned;
 - (b) the obligations imposed on the incumbent under paragraphs 8 and 9 shall be imposed on the dean of the cathedral concerned.
12. A diocesan bishop may delegate any of his functions under these Regulations (except his functions under paragraph 3) to a person appointed by him for the purpose, being a suffragan or assistant bishop or archdeacon of the diocese.
13. In these Regulations:
 - (a) 'incumbent', in relation to a parish, includes:
 - (i) in a case where the benefice concerned is vacant (and paragraph (ii) below does not apply), the rural dean;
 - (ii) in a case where a suspension period (within the meaning of the Pastoral Measure 1983) applies to the benefice concerned, the priest-in-charge; and
 - (iii) in a case where a special cure of souls in respect of the parish has been assigned to a vicar in a team ministry by a Scheme under the Pastoral Measure 1983 or by licence from the bishop, that vicar; and
 - (b) references to paragraph numbers are to the relevant paragraph or paragraphs in these Regulations.

Appendix 2

Resources

Preparation courses for 7-11s

Welcome to the Lord's Table by Margaret Withers, Bible Reading Fellowship, revised 2006

Structure: Ten units with two teaching sessions in each unit and a children's activity book.

Content: Each unit links to an element of the creed.

Extras: Four services to mark stages in the preparation and admission. Background information on preparing for change in the parish.

Share by Nick Harding, Kevin Mayhew, 2002

Structure: Five active sessions including games, Bible readings, craft and prayer.

Content: See God's work, Hear God's word, Accept God's way, Receive God's meal and Enjoy God's future.

Extras: Two parent sessions. Ideas for the first Communion service.

Children and Holy Communion by Diana Murrie and Steve Pearce, Kevin Mayhew, Revised 2003

Structure: Six sessions with photocopiable take-home sheets.

Content: The theme is 'belonging to God' with Holy Communion as the 'food of belonging'.

Extras: Background information and advice on planning for change.

Common Worship: I Belong by Aileen Urquhart, Redemptorist Publications 2001

Structure: Eleven sessions based around a children's workbook with leader's and parents' guides

Content: Each session is linked to one element in the Holy Communion service

Extras: Seven parents' sessions.

Roman Catholic preparation resources

We Celebrate the Eucharist by C Brusselman & BA Haggerty, Silver Burdett and Ginn

Structure: Nine sessions with a children's hardback book, catechist's guide and family guide

Content: Each session links to part of the Holy Communion service.

God's Greatest Gift by Bernadette Wilson, Viewpoint Resources

Structure: Ten sessions with a children's workbook, catechists guide and parents' guide.

Content: The theme is 'gift', e.g. the gift of ourselves, of God's Word, of forgiveness

Extras: Parents' sessions to run alongside those for the children. Additional music and art resources.

Other resources which may be useful in preparation

His Spirit is With Us by Leslie Francis and Diane Drayson, Kevin Mayhew, 2003

A project-based approach to the Eucharist, with readings, hymns and songs, prayers, children's activities, project ideas, discussion starters, dance/drama suggestions about how to integrate all this into the service. This could be a useful resource for those parishes wanting to devise their own preparation programme.

Meet Christ with Joy by Joan Brown SND, Kevin Mayhew, 1991

A children's workbook, intended to be used within families and to accompany any preparation programme. Some parts are distinctly Roman Catholic. The books are full of

activities, most of which are self-explanatory for adults, although the children may need some guidance. There is a Parents' and Catechists' Companion.

My Place in God's Story by Rachel Heathfield, CPAS, 1997

Activities and full-colour visual material to help children explore the basics of the gospel. Not directly about Communion but much of the resource is relevant and useful in creating a preparation programme.

Resources for planning Holy Communion which includes children

My Communion Book and ***The Communion Cube*** by Diana Murrie, National Society/Church House Publishing, 2002/2003

Resources taking children through the Common Worship Communion service.

Come and Join the Celebration by John Muir and Betty Pedley, National Society/Church House Publishing, 2001

Advice and ideas on helping adults and children to experience Holy Communion together.

Bread and Wine People by Susan Sayers, Kevin Mayhew, 2001

Ideas for 12 teaching Eucharists for all ages – each including explorations of the Bible readings in separate age groups. Also includes a fellowship meal, Passover celebration and Emmaus meal.

I Can Join in Common Worship, SPCK, 2003

A children's Communion service book.

The children's work resource library at Church House also includes a range of resources with general help on planning all-age worship.

Appendix 3

The rite for Admission of children to Holy Communion before Confirmation

Those who are to be admitted to Holy Communion shall stand before the minister

Minister: In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, we are now to admit these children to Holy Communion.

Churchwarden: We present to you (the candidates are named) who wish to be
or other admitted to Holy Communion.
Suitable person

The Minister addresses the children

Minister When you were baptised you were welcomed into the Church. Today we continue to celebrate God's love for you in Jesus Christ, to whom you belong. You are now to be admitted to Holy Communion. You will be able to share in the special meal given to us by Jesus as a sign of his living presence among us. It is our prayer that in the future you will be confirmed by the Bishop and will promise, with the help of the Holy Spirit, to go on following Jesus for the rest of your lives.

Minister: Do you wish to be admitted to Holy Communion?
Children: I do

Minister: Will you do your best to follow our Lord Jesus Christ?
Children: I will

Minister: Will you do your best to grow in the Christian faith so that later you will be confirmed by the Bishop.
Children: I will

Minister (to each child) N, I admit you to Holy Communion in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. May you find in this sacrament the love and the presence of God in your life.

The Minister addresses the congregation; children turn to face the congregation)

Minister: Will you as God's people here do everything you can to support and nurture these children in their journey of faith.

Congregation: We will.

(Here a suitable book or Gospel may be presented to each child on behalf of the congregation).



Certificate of Admission to Holy Communion

Parish of

By permission of the Bishop of Chester and in accordance with the Holy Communion Regulations

.....
(Name of communicant)

is admitted to Holy Communion before Confirmation.

.....
(Incumbent's signature)

.....
(Name of incumbent)

.....
(Date)

Appendix 5

Admission of Children to Holy Communion before Confirmation

Request for permission to change parish practice

Name of church

Deanery

Report of consultation process

Wording of the resolution of the PCC and date of meeting

Summary of plans for preparation of children for admission

What arrangements or plans do you have for nurture of children and young people in faith?

We agree to admit children to Holy Communion only in accordance with the Regulations made by General Synod and the Guidelines of the Diocese of Chester.

Signed (Incumbent)

.....

..... (Churchwardens)

Date