

St Peter's Harborne Baptism and Christening Policy

This policy follows the Canons of the Church of England and was agreed by St Peter's PCC on 21st May 2014

<http://www.churchofengland.org/about-us/structure/churchlawlegis/canons.aspx>

Child Baptism

1. Any parent residing in the parish can request baptism or "christening" for their child at St Peter's.
2. Baptisms should take place during the 10am Parish Communion (Canon B21). This happens on the fourth Sunday in the month, with a maximum of three families if families are presenting one child, or four children in total. Baptism at other times is only possible if candidates are part of a regularly worshipping family in the Church, in line with criteria b) or c) below. Baptism in a separate service is not possible for candidates who are not part of a regularly worshipping family at church.
3. If parents live outside the parish, the baptism can go ahead if they fulfil one of the following criteria:
 - a) They were married at St Peter's, Harborne;
 - b) They worship regularly at St Peter's, Harborne for at least six months before the baptism;
 - c) Their own parents (i.e., the grandparents of the child to be baptized) are regular worshippers at St Peter's, Harborne.
4. If the family lives outside the parish, but has some other connection with the parish they may be eligible, but this must be referred to the Vicar for a decision, and only in very unusual circumstances would permission be granted.
5. A family asking for baptism who live outside the parish and have qualified under the criteria set down above must inform the Vicar of their own parish, and should only proceed with her or his goodwill (Canon B23.5).
6. If the family has been attending church for fewer than six months but have shown themselves to be sincere and committed members of the congregation (for example, they have added their names to the electoral roll) then, again, a decision to baptize would be made at the Vicar's discretion.
7. Baptism preparation involves a visit from the Vicar to the family's home, explaining the service and the commitment it entails, and contact with a lay member of the congregation. The Baptism cannot take place without this preparation.

Godparents

8. Godparents must themselves be baptized. (Canon B.23.4)
9. A Godparent can be baptized at the same service at which they act as Godparent candidate for baptism.
10. The name of a Godparent can still be entered in the Baptism register if for good reason they cannot attend the service.
11. A Godparent can, if desired, be represented by a “proxy” at the service if they are unable to attend.
12. If an unbaptized person is not willing to be baptized before or at the service at which they wish to be a Godparent, they cannot be a Godparent or be entered into the register as such.

Adult Baptism

13. Adult candidates for baptism should normally receive preparation arranged with the Vicar.
14. All adult candidates for baptism should be reminded of the requirement to consider Confirmation as well as baptism (Canons B23 and B24).
15. Adult candidates should have a “sponsor” who replies as a parent or godparent in the baptism service. The term “sponsor” describes a supporting person for an adult candidate for baptism and confirmation and should not be used in conjunction with a child candidate.
16. The same rules (7-11) that apply to Godparents apply to sponsors.