

Practicalities of running a Confirmation course – some ‘how to’ tips will help you to understand and have access to the practicalities of running a course with an example session plan (separate document).

You have the opportunity to lead some people towards Confirmation:

- **Assess the age group** – mixed age groups can work well together but will need care and thought to ensure that everyone is catered for. Choose a course which adults can relate to also. If the group is too diverse in age, you might want to consider meeting separately.
- **Safeguarding** – if young people are to be involved with the group, ensure that the relevant Diocesan Safeguarding (General Consent) form has been completed.
- **If you are not Clergy** running a course (say for instance a Youth Alpha but you want to offer Confirmation at the end of it), discuss all the options of the course you are wanting to run with the Clergy - it would be good for them to attend some of the sessions. It is their responsibility to ‘say’ to the Bishop that the candidates are ready to be Confirmed.
- **Who should run the course** – we would suggest that those people who are good at articulating what their faith means to them personally should be involved with the running of the course. Particularly in relation to young people (YP), Kenda Creasy Dean in her book, *Practicing Passion: Youth and the quest for a passionate church* says “The most significant curriculum for any adolescent is the *person who teaches.*”
- **How many weeks to meet for/length of sessions** – this tends to be typically for between 6 and 8 weeks but could be longer if required – certainly, some of the courses are of a greater length than this but you don’t have to use all of the sessions. Length of sessions is anything from 1 to 2 hours.
- **Young people** – very often have lots of other commitments after school so you would be wise to choose your meeting time carefully if you want them all to attend regularly.
- **Which resources to use:**
 - see the list of resources shown separately. Some people use their own resources to lead with but our advice would be to use a pre-prepared plan/resource or plans and adapt as required (see *Example Session Plan* document); generally (particularly YP) people prefer a format that they become used to over a number of weeks and enjoy the familiar format.
 - If it is a YP’s group that are meeting, consider the following as it may influence which resource you use – are they YP:
 - interested in faith but not sure they believe?
 - have made a commitment at summer camp etc.
 - who have faith rooted in their families.
- **Food** – no matter who you are running the course for, food is always really welcome; if a member of your congregation is able to provide this as a gift to the candidates, this can be quite special for those giving and receiving.
- **Recruiting people** – Ask them! Sometimes it is wise to offer a course which is ‘Exploring Christian Faith’ with a view to offering Confirmation during the course; a

lot of people (particularly YP) do not know what Confirmation is, so starting at this earlier point is helpful.

- **Where to meet** - meeting in a 'lounge-type' environment works well – it allows informal discussion to take place within a relaxed environment where each individual can express themselves.
- **During the course:**
 - It's good to include events outside the 'curriculum', ie. visit to a Cathedral, Abbey or your local Church (thin place), explore the stars outdoors or visit an observatory. This encourages people to look beyond themselves and see a bigger picture.
 - You might want to offer 'journals' for candidates to complete during the course
 - Ask members of your congregation to pray specifically for each candidate during the course; you could also set up mentoring for any YP following on from your course.
- **Good engagement** – see the separate document (Good engagement) which gives advice and ideas for running Confirmation courses and particularly the *content* and why it is important to vary this throughout the course. Also, Pete Maidment's book – [Reconnecting with Confirmation](#) is a fantastic book to read for more ideas.
- **When Confirmation has taken place** – before you run your Confirmation programme, start planning and thinking about the continued support you will offer to your candidates *after* Confirmation has taken place – this is important to ensure they 'become' part of your church's on-going lifelong discipleship programme. Over the years, too many people have been 'lost' after their Confirmation for not receiving adequate on-going support.

**Salisbury Diocese Confirmation Project
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