

ST JOSEPH'S COLLEGE, MILDURA



Policy Number:	COLLEGE 36
Policy Name:	Debutante Ball Policy
Contact Officer:	Principal
Date Approved by Executive:	August 21, 2019
Date of Next Review:	August 2022
Related Policies:	

PREAMBLE

God is at the centre of our College...Mercy is the heartbeat of the Gospel. We encourage every student to grow in the fullness of life and realise their potential through the bread we break at school, the bread of relationships and the bread of conversation. Let us engage the heart and bring faith to life and life to faith (Thomas Groome).

LEGISLATION

This policy takes into account relevant legislative requirements within the state of Victoria, including the specific requirements of the Victorian Child Safe Standards as set out in *Ministerial Order No. 870*. This policy applies to St Joseph's College staff, including employees, volunteers, contractors and clergy.

1. RATIONALE

1.1 St Joseph's College recognises that the Debutante Ball is an event which connects the College to the community and provides the students with the opportunity to learn new skills.

1.2 St Joseph's College is also cognisant of the need to keep children safe and will take all necessary measures to ensure their safety whilst they are participating in the Debutante Ball.

2. PURPOSE

- To ensure all those involved with the College Debutante Ball have the appropriate Working with Children Check (WWCC) or relevant Police Check;
- To state the frequency of the event;
- To clarify who is eligible to participate;
- To clarify the structure of, and the protocols regarding, the organising committee and the running of the Debutante Ball.

3. AIMS

3.1 During Year 11 a Debutante Ball is held for St Joseph's Year 11 students. Past students reflect that the Debutante Ball is a major highlight of their years at St Joseph's College. The major aims of the Debutante Ball are:

- To bring St Joseph's College Year 11 students together in a happy, relaxed atmosphere;
- To learn something of the basics of Ballroom dancing;
- To make students aware of social graces, formal dress and deportment.

4. IMPLEMENTATION, ORGANISATION & SUPERVISION

- The Community Engagement Officer and Debutante Ball Committee will make all decisions regarding the Debutante Ball with consultation with the Principal, Deputy Principal – Students and the Business Manager.
- The selection of students to participate in the Debutante Ball will be made by the Debutante Ball Committee in consultation with the Community Engagement Officer. Upon selection, students and parents will be required to attend a compulsory Information Evening at which the rules for participation will be clearly detailed. All students and their parents wishing to participate will then be required to pay an initial deposit and to sign a Participation and Behaviour Contract agreeing to the rules.
- Acceptance of enrolment into the Debutante Ball will be subject to up to date payment/arrangement of school fees and compliance of all the Debutante Ball Committee Rules, as well as fulfilling all Year 11 (including Unit 3 / 4 where applicable) academic and extra-curricular requirements.
- Once the schedule for weekly rehearsals has been arranged, the staff member assigned the duty of overseeing the supervision of students will organise a roster of staff volunteers and ensure that the rules for student behaviour are enforced. The Deputy Principal - Students will be kept informed of any rule breaches to ensure appropriate consequences are put in place.

5. ELIGIBILITY

- Students must attend St Joseph's College to be eligible to participate (Girls and boys).
- Girls in Year 11 are eligible to participate in the Debutante Ball.
- Boys in Year 11 or 12 are eligible to participate in the Debutante Ball. In exceptional circumstances, boys who are in Year 10 may be a partner.
- Students participate in the Debutante Ball as a couple and may choose a partner regardless of gender provided that the eligibility criteria are also met.
- Girls who cannot participate in the Debutante Ball during their Year 11 year, due to illness or other exceptional circumstances, may be permitted to participate during their Year 12 year. These students should seek permission from the committee and/or Principal if they wish to participate. (It should be noted as a general rule, that if a student is well enough to attend school, they are well enough to make their debut.)

6. FREQUENCY OF EVENT

- St Joseph's College will host a Debutante Ball every year, unless the interested numbers of girls fall below eight (8). The final decision will factor in the cost of running the ball with low numbers.
- Should the numbers fall below eight (8) and the Ball is cancelled – the girls who miss out in their Year 11 year, are eligible to participate the following year when in Year 12.
- The Debutante Ball will be held towards the end of July of each year.
- The Debutante Ball will take place on a Saturday evening.
- Rehearsals will commence in the first week of May – unless otherwise agreed by all participants.

7. COMMITTEE

- A member of the St Joseph's College staff will head the organising committee, this will be the Community Engagement Officer or a staff member approved by the Principal.
- The remainder of the Committee will consist of interested parent, staff and/or community members.
- The Committee will jointly make decisions, after consultation with the student group, other parents and the College Principal where appropriate.
- All expenditure for the Debutante Ball will be approved by the Business Manager, before any materials are ordered or booked.

- The Committee will determine the cost per student for the Debutante Ball based on the foreseen expenditure for the ball.
- All payments associated with the Debutante Ball will be transacted through the College.
- All relevant Risk Assessments will be undertaken and submitted to the College Risk, Compliance and Asset Manager for review before the event.

8. PROCEDURE FOR STUDENTS

- All students wishing to participate will submit their names to the Committee mid Term 3 in the preceding year.
- All students wishing to participate in the St Joseph's College Debutante Ball will submit their names and partnership deposit to the committee by Week 2; Term 4 in the preceding year. The partnership deposit is non-refundable.
- All final payments for the Debutante Ball will be due by the end of mid Term 1 of the year of the Ball unless other arrangements have been made.
- All students wishing to participate, will receive a copy of the Information pack containing a signed agreement to return to the Debutante Ball Committee. This will ensure that they are aware of the rules and expectations regarding behaviour leading up to, and during the event.
- Any student suspended by St Joseph's College, may be ineligible to participate in the Debutante Ball, at the discretion of the Principal.
- All students will respect the NO ALCOHOL policy of the St Joseph's College Debutante Ball.

9. PROCEDURES FOR PARENTS/CARERS/GUESTS

- Parents/Carers will sign an agreement which covers their willingness to meet the financial costs associated with the Debutante Ball.
- Parent/Carers will be eligible to join the organising committee.
- Parents/Carers/Guests will abide by the set numbers of guests for the Debutante Ball – which will be determined by the number of debutantes in that year.
- Parents/Carers/Guests will abide by the Victorian legislation which prohibits smoking in the premises.
- All parents/carers/guests must adhere to the Liquor Licencing Agreement for the premises, any guest determined to be breaching these rules will be asked to leave the premises.
- All parents/carers/guests who attend the Debutante Balls must wear smart evening wear. No denim; No jeans; No sneakers; No T-shirts and No casual dress. It is important that your guests are made aware of this dress code as they will be refused entry by security staff if deemed in violation of the dress code.
- As part of our College Debutante Ball tradition, debutantes will dance the "Pride of Erin" with their father or a male guest of their choice. Then, the partners will dance the "Pride of Erin" with their mother or a female guest of their choice.
- So that the parents/guardians/special guest will know what to expect, the Committee invite the Fathers/special guest of Debutantes and Mothers of Partners or a special guest to come to Club da Vinci the date specified on the Debutante Calendar for the given year.

10. PROCEDURE FOR ST JOSEPH'S COLLEGE

- The College will ensure that all parents/volunteers/instructors who assist with the Debutante Ball have the appropriate WWCC or Police Check. Their details will be added to the relevant College register (refer Ministerial Order 870).
- The Principal will have the ultimate say in any issues which are controversial or potentially divisive, regarding the Debutante Ball.
- Students participating will have up-to-date medical information submitted and provided at the trainings and the event/s, a first aid kit must be present and all trainings and the event and a trained first aid committee member/s or staff present in-case of medical necessity at trainings and the event/s.

- If there are any concerns regarding partnerships/couples which arise before the event or during training, the Community Engagement Officer will discuss with the relevant students and parents/carers, and refer, when necessary, to the Deputy Principal – Students and/or Wellbeing Services for assistance.
- A roll will be taken each week for attendance, any student due to medical reasons or camps/vacations MUST notify the committee the week PRIOR of their non-attendance.
- Order of presentation will be organised by the Debutante Committee. With regard to the debutante speech maker, cutting of the debutante cake and gift presenters, these will be done by the way of public ballot with debutantes and partners present.
- All correspondence between the Committee and students participating will be done via e-mail or at organised meetings.

11. RULES FOR PARTICIPATION

11.1 In order to achieve the above stated aims it is vital that there be a set of rules which govern the practices and the actual night of the Debutante Ball. Complete co-operation of the following rules is essential:

- Attendance at Debutante Ball practices is mandatory for Debutantes and Partners. Unexplained absences will jeopardise enrolment in this event.
- Any student, due to medical reasons or camps/vacations, MUST notify the committee the week PRIOR of their non-attendance.
- If a student misses Debutante Ball practice, the partner must still attend. The missing student will need to organise a replacement partner to fill in for them. If this is not able to be organised by the student, the committee will endeavour to assist with a replacement.
- Attendance at the Year 11 Information Evening (incorporating Debutante Ball) is compulsory for the Debutante, the Partner and the parents/carers of both Debutante and Partner. Acceptance of enrolment in the Debutante Ball will be subject to attendance at this meeting.
- All College rules apply for the duration of each rehearsal class. This includes no chewing gum, no use of mobile phones, etc.
- Students may wear casual clothes to the Debutante Ball practice sessions. It is suggested the females wear heeled shoes (preferably their Debutante Shoes), and boys wear dress shoes to assist with their dancing.
- All females are to wear a long, floor length skirt from week one of practice.
- The girls' ball gowns are required to be of a modest fashion, in keeping with the spirit of a Catholic College. All gowns must have firmly attached straps that cannot be adjusted to an off the shoulder style. No strapless gowns permitted. All gowns must be approved well in advance by the Debutante Ball Committee members prior to the evening via the submission of a photograph to the committee by the date specified, so that any alterations to meet requirements can be effected in a timely manner.
- Debutantes are to also wear elbow length solid white gloves. These are to be worn until after desert is served and the students have finished their 'formal' dancing for the evening. Debutantes may take gloves off when eating.
- Debutantes will be given corsages. They are to wear these on their right arm all night whilst they have their gloves on.
- Debutantes are required to have a traditional full length white dress (not cream or gold). Careful consideration should be given to the style of dress chosen as some styles may be problematic on the evening (e.g.: dresses with over-size hoops or trains or strapless styles).
- Debutantes are required to wear appropriate shoes which must be worn all evening. Shoes must be white, clear or silver. It is preferable that the Debutantes shoes are no higher than 6cm and that they have a sturdy block heel and ankle strap. Debutantes may bring a second pair of low heeled dress shoes for later in the evening, no casual, sneakers, slippers or the like are to be worn.
- Boys must wear the tie correctly (top button done up and tie not loosened), waistcoat and jacket until after dessert has been served.
- Suits, shirts, ties, shoes and accessories must be returned in the suit bags to the hire company. Any missing or damaged items are the responsibility of the student.

- The College will arrange hire of the boys' suits and shoes from a local formal suit hire business. All arrangements for measurements, collection and returns will be made with the business. The committee will notify students of the business and the dates for arrangements.
- Black business men's socks and black briefs must be worn by the partner.
- The boy's gloves are to be worn until after dessert is served and the students have finished their 'formal' dancing for the evening. Debutantes may take gloves off when eating.
- The consumption of alcohol by the Debutantes or their Partners on the night of the Ball is strictly forbidden. Any student arriving at the venue intoxicated will not be presented.
- Debutantes and Partners are to arrive dressed ready for the Ball between 4.15pm – 4.40pm on the night of the Ball. Any street clothes or bags are to be brought into the venue and kept in the Roccisano Room and kept there until AFTER the night has concluded. This room is locked and only accessible to the Debutantes, Partners and the Committee members on the night of the event.
- Chewing gum is not to be consumed on the evening.
- The College does not condone 'after parties' and strongly advises parents not to risk hosting such events. Acceptance into the Debutante Ball is made on the understanding that parents fully support this policy and will take responsibility to ensure that no such activities are arranged.
- Complete co-operation by the students with the above rules is essential. If a student does not fully co-operate with the Debutante Ball organisers he/she will be given three warnings after which they will be withdrawn from the ball after consultation with the Deputy Principal – Students. The College Principal reserves the right to withdraw any student from the Debutante Ball.
- Debutantes and their partners are to make their own arrangements for personal photographers and grooming on the day. Participants are to be aware that they are to be at the venue by 4.40pm on the night of the presentation. We suggest all photographic sessions are finished by 4pm to allow for travel time to the venue.
- As part of the program for the evening, we ask that Debutantes and their partners provide a profile of themselves. The profiles will be read out and included in a printed booklet for guests, the profiles are to include the following information: -
GIRLS - 40 words for Dress description - (i.e. fabric, style, special features etc.), 40 words for hobbies and 40 words for interests - future career/life ambitions. **Length of profile for the debutante is 120 words maximum.**
PARTNERS - 40 words for hobbies and 40 words for interests, future career/life ambitions. **Length of profile for partners is 80 words total.** The profiles are to be provided to the Committee via email by the date specified on the Debutante Calendar.
- A Debutante and Partner Formal Photograph will be taken at the training session on the **MONDAY** Queen's Birthday long weekend at training. Students are to **come to training dressed in semi-formal / smart attire.**
 - Girls – Make-up, nice hair, dress, pants, skirt and nice top.
 - Boys - Smart semi-formal / smart attire, dress pants, shirt, tie and belt, clean shaven and neat hair (jacket optional). If hair is shoulder length, it must be tied up. We are paying for these photos to be taken – so you **MUST** do it on this night. After the photos are taken – you can quickly get changed into your practice clothing.

12. TICKETING

- Committee members who have a student in the Debutante Ball will pay full price for every ticket purchased to the Ball where their child is being presented.
- Committee members who attend any Debutante Balls purely to work do not pay for their tickets. Depending upon ticket availability committee members may be allocated a partner ticket at the same rate that the venue charges per head.
- Debutantes may be given the opportunity to nominate their preferred night for their Debutante Ball but the Committee has complete authority to allocate a Debutante Ball to a Debutante in a manner that best serves the majority. This will be dependent upon student numbers and how many balls are to be run in the given year.

- The committee will set the ticket pricing in line with budgeting for expenditure for the Debutante Ball. This will be approved by the Business Manager.
- Ticket pricing will include a Primary Age Ticket (children's meal) and Adult Ticket (adult meal). ONLY children of Primary School age or under will be sold the Primary Age Ticket.
- Tickets will be issued upon payment by students/families/carers only after payment has been made.
- All students are given a calendar of information with all payment dates, information dates and ticketing information in Term 1 of the year of the Debutante Ball.
- The Committee's decision as to allocation of tables and guests for the night shall be final.
- Debutantes and Partners will have 12 tickets allocated to them each at this stage. These tickets are allocated but you are not required to sell all of them. Families are welcome to place their names on a waiting list for additional tickets however; there are no promises as to those being available. **This is totally dependent upon Debutante numbers and the Committee's discretion.**
- There will be student tables allocated to 'friends of debutantes' – these numbers will be limited and approved by the committee. This way parent tables can be kept for family and family friends. These tables will be supervised closely by the committee and security. No guests on these tables will be allowed to drink alcohol. All students attending without a parent will be asked to leave if they are breaking the law or College rules.

13. CATERING

- A grazing plate followed by a two course alternate serve meal will be provided to guests.
- Allergies and dietary requirements may be catered for if notification is provided at the time of ticket purchase.
- Drinks are available at bar prices, strictly no BYO.

14. FEES

- The total fees for participation in the Debutante Ball are set by the committee with assistance from the College Business Manager. The individual cost will be specified at the Parent Information Night. (2019 fee was \$450.00 per individual.) This fee includes – training costs; corsages; DVD; a professional 8 x 10 print of the group photo; CD of other photos, meal and soft drink on the night.
- All students wishing to participate in the St Joseph's College Debutante Ball will submit their names and partnership deposit to the committee by Week 2; Term 4 in the preceding year. The partnership deposit is non-refundable. **(Refer 8. PROCEDURE FOR STUDENTS for further information).**
- All final payments for the Debutante Ball will be due by the mid Term 1 of the year of the Ball unless other arrangements have been made.
- Partners are to pay for their suit, shoe, glove hire separately. (2019 fee was \$160 per individual)
- Debutantes are to cover all individual costs for their grooming, dress, shoes etc.
- Families / Guests are to pay for tickets as per the ticketing information. **(Refer 12. TICKETING)**
- If there are any concerns regarding payment, parents/carers can contact the College Business Manager to discuss an alternative arrangement.