Burwood Girls High School P & C Meeting of 15th August 2012

Present: As per attendance book

Alice Magoffin opened the meeting 7.20pm

Guest Speaker: Police Liaison Officer Constable Shannon Thomson, speaking on cyber safety

Cyber Safety: What you do online stays online – it will be around forever.

Social media sites: Facebook, twitter, tumblr, YouTube, flickr, meetup, renren (Chinese site), friendster etc. Police also have a Facebook page. Everyone is using social media sites. Girls love chatting and messaging more than boys, but boys use social media more than girls for online gaming.

Parents need to limit online time. For 12-17 year olds, messaging and chatting is the No. 1 use, social websites 2nd, online gaming the 3rd highest user, and 4th “other things on the net” (this includes accessing porn, illegal downloading of movies etc).

Some statistics; average user of Facebook spends 55 minutes a day, 6.5 hours a week on the site. Information is power, Facebook makes its profits selling information about people to companies.

Children don’t know where they are going to be in 10 years time. They have to be aware what they put out on the internet will be there forever. On Facebook the “default” privacy settings allow anyone to see anything – users need to set privacy settings at their maximum. Remember that the groups that your children join will inevitably reflect on their character. Don’t let children request “Friendships” online with people they don’t know. Don’t allow them to post messages on the walls of people they don’t know. Don’t give out personal passwords to anyone, not even best friends – however parents should always have access to children’s facebook pages. This is crucial to police, if a child goes missing. Every parent should be a “Friend” to their child on Facebook. Be sure to customise privacy settings in Facebook so your child’s profile can’t be accessed by just anyone. Don’t post anything on Facebook that you wouldn’t like an employer or potential employer to see.

With open privacy settings on Facebook, often a name, personal photo, and an address and phone number can be found easily, and a Google map and street view of the address can also be easily found. This is valuable information for burglars, when a post gives information as to when holidays are going to be taken.

Cyber offences: it is illegal to send inappropriate messages to harass, menace or offend using computers or mobile phones. Maximum penalty is 3 years imprisonment and/or $5,500 financial penalty (Criminal Code Act 1995 Section 474.17). The police is calling
for bail conditions preventing use of mobile phones or social media for people who offend.

Sexting: Sending explicit photos or messages - 39% of teens send such messages, 38% of teens say they share such messages – teens say pressure from boyfriends and friends lead them to send such content. These images, once sent, are sent on, and go viral. Parents are often dragged into these cases straight away – for example, parents having explicit images sent by their children from the parents’ phones. The law and police are there to protect the children. Boys are usually the ones circulating this kind of content, which can become part of someone’s “digital footprint”. These images can follow people for life – they are impossible to remove. These images will damage future careers and relationships. It is illegal to take a sexually explicit image and transmit the image – Penalty is 15 years imprisonment for possession or passing on such images. People have been charged with possessing and passing on such images.

Antivirus and child protection software like Trendscan will allow parents to monitor a child’s internet usage.

Principal’s Report

Special events; July: subject selection options evening years 11/12; sister school visit Yangzi HS from Nanjing, Chins; New Maria Hong Korean community liaison officer has been successfully engaging with Korean students and parents. NAIDOC assembly with 2 Aboriginal performers aged 12 and 13; Parent-teacher night for Years 7 and 9 – whole families are coming along now; Girls involved in science and engineering awards; HSC Drama showcase; Education Week Assembly. Dance group performance. Junior girls performance; Duke of Edinburgh Awards presentations; Body of Works Exhibition in the Hall.

Future Events; field study day #3, Middle Years Conference; HSC Music Soiree; Big Night Out; vaccinations for years 7 and 10; Year 8/9 subject selection evening; dance showcase in the hall, year 11 exams on September 5-14; GAT presentation in the library, 19 September the Year 12 Graduation; 21 September is the last day of Term 3.

Items/Issues:
- School chaplain/youth worker Liz James (Wesley Mission) has been funded to continue for 3 years at the school, as a youth worker. She has been very supportive of our school welfare team.
- Year 12 jackets available
- Prefects decided to wear orange jackets and staff members assist them. The girls are bad at crossing Queen Street and Cheltenham Road. The prefects are assisting.
- Proud Schools poster up – this is a program to prevent homophobia. Wear Purple day on Friday 7th September to support Proud Schools; Enrolments for next year are strong, with higher numbers in Years 11 and 12, where more out-of-area students are included. A letter is soon to go to Burwood Council to remove the road into the adjacent Council park that is across Burwood Girls High School land.
Minutes of Previous meeting of Christine and Elaine put and seconded. Adopted.

$6,929 balance for P & C account, with more money waiting to be deposited. Insurance to be paid for P & C Nick and Chery put and seconded – adopted.

Uniform shop account outlined. Copies of both accounts tabled. Received. The P & C Treasurer has stepped down; Elaine Effie and Chery moved and seconded to receive the Treasurer’s report.

No correspondence received.

Office bearers need to check their P &C fees for the year have been paid.

P & C contributions: where to direct the contributions. Mia will follow this up with her executive and bring options back to the next meeting.

Item of general business: Scientists in School program – are there any parents who are scientists or engineers who would like to volunteer to inspire the teachers and students with science. Volunteers would be asked to make presentations to classes.

Question re school subscription to maths online – school appears to no longer subscribe, however students found it engaging.

Presentations for next meetings: Visual arts or a science teaching presentation. Only 2 P & C meetings left for the year: October and the AGM in November.