



Dear Parents

As we come to the end of an unseasonably warm February, I hope that you have all had an opportunity to enjoy some of our glorious countryside and get out and about a bit more than is normal at this time of year.

At the beginning of the month I had the pleasure of sitting down with every girl in Lower Three to talk about their likes and dislikes and to discuss books amongst other things. In school February always ends with the sending out of the 11+ offers and scholarship outcomes. I know it is a nervous wait for many families but I hope that we will be welcoming a lot of lovely new students to Westfield in September.

It was also a pleasure to welcome candidates for Director of Music to school and I am very pleased to announce that Mrs Wendy Locks will be joining us after Easter to take over from Dr Hardy. Mrs Locks is currently teaching at Ponteland Middle School and has wide experience of running extra-curricular musical groups. That same week I was also able to appoint Mrs Gates as maternity Maths cover for Dr Barnett.

Spring time is, strangely, the time when we start to plan for the new year and girls start to choose their options for GCSE and A-level. Upper Four start this process off with their options evening and they have had a lot of events to help them to make good choices for each individual. As a year group they have been very organised and every girl returned her option choices before the deadline. Now Mrs Quinn has the unenviable task of putting these into blocks to start creating next year's timetable.

It was a real treat to join our senior choir girls at NSB this month for the annual choral day. The chance to sing in a large four-part choir is rare in a girls' school and the concert which parents and friends enjoyed at the end of the day showed how much fun and enjoyment the girls got from this opportunity. I had to rush back to school that same evening for the presentation of prizes in this year's photography competition organised by Mr Stone. With a record level of entries from across the school including girls, staff and parents we have been enjoying the display in the dining room all month. I would like to thank Robertson's of Gosforth for sponsoring the prizes and John Faulkner Photography for judging and being so generous with his time to speak to the entrants.

The Westfield Association/PTA sponsored the popular Junior discos again this year for Valentine's Day. The girls had lots of fun and enjoyed sharing this with some of the boys from NSB. We are always grateful for the support of parents and I would like to thank the PTA for organising so many social functions in order to help bring parents together. Do make sure that you reserve your tickets for their biggest event of the year, the Camellia Ball in July. This year the theme is Casino Royale and tickets are on sale from the school offices at £45 per head. The price includes a 3-course meal with wine plus entertainment and a disco and prices are lower this year than last! I do hope to see many of you there.

Finally, Sunshine in my Pocket day brought February to a close. This really important outreach day brought 64 visitors in from 4 local schools to join our Upper One girls in learning about keeping healthy in mind and body, *mens sana in corpore sano*. Workshops included trampolining and Zumba, making a healthy snack and mindfulness techniques.

It's really pleasing to see so many parents accepting Classlist and starting to use it. We hope that it will be a useful tool for communicating within each year group. Remember to check your privacy settings and how widely you wish to share your details but the school will not share your information from the app.

I also hope that you have been following the progress of the new build with the same sort of excitement that we all are in school. It is really shooting up at the moment. I look forward to seeing any of you who wish to raise any questions at the Parents' forum next week.

Best wishes

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Neil Walker', with a stylized, flowing script.

Neil Walker