

COVER STAR

She's become the poster girl for realistic post-baby bod goals. **Kimberley Walsh** on refusing to own scales and why she's keeping mum on BFF Cheryl



BY NATALIE EDWARDS

Kimberley Walsh has been catapulted back to her Girls Aloud heyday – it's halfway through our shoot before the singer realises she's been to this east London studio many times before with her band mates. Suddenly she's transported back to an era of fake lashes, coordinating mindresses and shed loads of hairspray.

"We shot so much stuff here over the years, like tour programmes and calendars," she says looking around smiling. "So it holds a lot of good memories."

"When you've been in the business this long, there's never a place you can go to where you haven't shot before. You think: 'Does this show my age? Have I been doing this too long?'"

For the record, with her youthful appearance Kimberley, 35, does not look like someone who has spent the past 15 years in the limelight, after bursting on to the scene on ITV talent show *Popstars: The Rivals* in 2002.

Nor is her down-to-earth persona typical of someone who was one fifth of the UK's biggest-selling girl group of the 21st century, with over 4.3 million singles (four of which went to No.1) and 4 million albums sold.

But despite whispers of a reunion resurfacing every few months, it's unlikely that Kimberley will be back here posing alongside Cheryl, 33, Nicola Roberts, 31, Sarah Harding, 35, and Nadine Coyle, 31.

"I've read about us reuniting and thought: 'Well, nobody's spoken to me.' I've not heard anything from any of the girls and I speak to most of them regularly, so it's not on the cards anytime soon I'm afraid."

"It's funny, though, because I keep reading that and thinking: 'Oh really? Maybe they've decided not to call me on this occasion!'"

"But I'm sure I would be the first to know if it was happening. I think everyone is really busy doing what they're doing. Right now, it feels like we've moved on and are doing different things."

So with the upcoming 15th anniversary of the release of their No.1 debut single *Sound of The Underground* in December, would they rule out

ever getting back together?

"You can never say never in life, can you? I guess it's just not where my head is at the moment, but stranger things have happened."

It's fair to say a lot has changed for Kimberley and her band mates since they were last in this studio.

In the years that have followed, there have been high-profile romances, divorces and *X Factor* gigs (Cheryl), rehab to overcome addiction to prescription drugs and alcohol (Sarah), plus unsuccessful solo careers (Nicola and Nadine).

There have also been several babies, with Nadine welcoming her daughter Anaiya Bell in February 2014 (Kimberley has yet to meet her) and Cheryl giving birth to son Bear Grey Payne in March, more of which later. Meanwhile, Kimberley is now mum to Bobby, two, and five-month-old Cole.

"Cole's such a nice-natured baby," she says misty-eyed. "He's so happy all the time and is really loving. He's the easiest baby to make smile."

Today marks Kimberley's first fashion shoot since giving birth and she's realistic about her post-baby bod.

"A lot of mums don't go back [to their pre-baby bodies] straight away. Gaining weight is a sacrifice, but a whole human being has been created, so it's fine!"

If there are any pre-shoot nerves, then Bradford-born Kimberley hides them well. In fact, she's revelling in getting out of the house while husband, former Triple 8 star turned property developer Justin Scott, 34, looks after their brood.

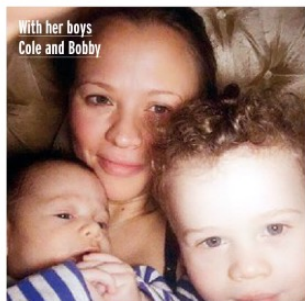
"I used to moan about work and shooting every day, but now it's most definitely a day off!" she giggles. "As much as I adore my boys, it feels very easy not to have one attached to me at all times!"

Kimberley looks incredible in front of the camera as she shows off her curves, but she's no fan of quick fixes.

"I'm still breastfeeding, so it's not really an option to diet. When you're breastfeeding you tend to crave sweet things, like chocolate. I know it's short-lived, so I'll deal with it later on."

"Don't get me wrong, I'd love to be one of those women who just went back [to their pre-baby bodies], but I've always known it's going to take a bit of work. I'm too tired at the moment to say: 'I need to get to the gym or do a diet.'"

"You've got to be realistic. I wouldn't be a very good mum if I didn't eat, as then I'd be hungry and tired. ➔



With her boys Cole and Bobby



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BABY WEIGHT
IS A SACRIFICE
YOU MAKE'

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