

# Blinking Together in North Leamington



For the past five years the 11 schools in North Leamington have been working together as part of the Leamington North Cluster. This has led to children from all schools being involved in a wide variety of learning based projects and activities, and increasingly, staff being involved in shared networking and professional development activities. The cluster has a well regarded reputation for effective collaborative work within the Local Authority. In 2013/14 School Leaders are working hard to ensure that our work together is linked directly to school improvement and is measurable in terms of impact.

**BLINK** is a one-day intensive focus on key aspects of the school

**BLINK** celebrates what is good and great in a school

**BLINK** identifies and asks questions about how practice might be even better

**BLINK** offers focused feedback to staff

**BLINK** values what colleagues are doing and leaves them feeling good about their practice

**BLINK** offers great professional development for those doing the blinking

In Leamington North the Blink Model is being used for schools to get know each other better and help support each other in school improvement.

It is recognised that spending focussed time in each other's schools is a valuable experience for both parties.

The impact of the process and the feedback given is underpinned by the good relationships that are embedded across the schools in our cluster.

## The Blinking Story So Far.....

In the Autumn Term 2013 Heads and Deputies spent a morning working with Roy Blatchford, Director of the National Education Trust, focussing on Blinks. Following this session all heads and deputies spent a day 'blinking' in each other's schools. Both verbal and written feedback was given at the end of each Blink visit and fed back to staff. During a second morning with Roy Blatchford the Blink process in each school was shared and leaders reflected on their experiences. The outcome from this meeting was a collective desire to develop Blinking as a tool to support school improvement across the cluster, with a commitment to involve staff at all levels from schools.

*Blinking in another school provided excellent opportunities for self-evaluation as well as both valuing the strengths of and asking improvement-driven questions of the school visited. It is a brilliant way of gleaning new ideas and celebrating success across the cluster.*

Primary  
Headteacher

Primary Deputy  
Headteacher

*We found the input of colleagues incredibly supportive in our drive to be an Outstanding School; the questions raised have prompted us to look in more detail at the finer points of our Learning Improvement Plan.*

## Blink to the Future

- Schools have committed to termly blinks during which staff from one school will visit another school.
- Blink activity will be underpinned by a protocol that all have agreed.
- Blink activity will involve different staff other than just heads and deputies.
- The impact of Blink work will be captured at the end of each term and fed into reviews.