The big picture

• We live in changing times;
• But change is difficult;
• What kind of learning are we encouraging?
• How can leaders encourage effective change?
  – The Destination Postcard
  – ‘Shrink the change’
  – ‘Smooth the path’
• Whole school change.
We live in changing times

.... and the pace is getting quicker (phones, medicine)

• We can’t ignore it

• Changes in schools:
  – Too much change? The case of England (school ownership, curriculum, examinations – all at once.)
  – Norway – manageable levels of change?
  – *What do see as the most biggest changes in schools at the moment?*
What have we learned, as change agents, about encouraging change in schools?

• *It’s not simple* – ‘knowledge creation is an intensely human, messy process of imagination, invention and learning from mistakes embedded in a web of human relationships’. (Senge & Sharmer)

• *It’s slow* – change comes in small steps and needs continuous effort to sustain.

• *It is often hard to change an established culture* – ‘we’ve always done it this way’.

• *We need leaders to encourage change*
We know what we should be doing

The new regulations in the Education Act are founded on four key principles for effective formative assessment, namely that pupils learn best when they:

1. Understand what they are supposed to learn and what is expected of them;
2. Receive feedback that informs them about the quality of their work or performance;
3. Receive advice on how they can improve;
4. Are involved in their own learning activities for example through assessing their own work and development.

*(Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2011)*
Change: It’s about hearts and minds

‘In highly successful change efforts people find ways to help others see the problems or solutions in ways which influence emotions, not just thought’ (Kotter & Cohen)

• This is at the centre of school improvement (Fullan & Hargreaves)

• We know what we should be doing (mind) so is it more about hearts??

Most Norwegian teachers know about AfL. Do most put it into practice on a daily basis?

Ways to motivate:
Search out the bright spots and build on them
Use ‘early adopters’ and enthusiasts to model
The ‘see-feel-change’ model rather than the ‘analyse-think-change’ model
The culture of the school: changing the script

‘Teachers learn to teach by growing up in a particular culture, by watching the methods their teachers used when they were students. The methods most teachers use are inherited from earlier generations of instructors, not invented when they reach the classroom’.

Teachers follow scripts that they acquire as members of their culture, and their effectiveness depends on the scripts they use. Recruiting highly qualified teachers will not result in steady improvement as long as they use the same scripts. It’s the scripts that must be improved

(Stigler & Hiebert)

When you first came into your school what surprised you about its culture and scripts?
What did you want to change?
What kind of learners are we producing?

Attitudes to learning

• **Surface** – *Reproducing* – to cope with course requirements. Teacher dependent, ‘what do I need to do to pass?’ Memorising facts/treating course as unrelated bits of knowledge. Finding difficulty in making sense of new ideas. Seeing little value in course or tasks set.

• **Strategic / instrumental** – *Organising* - the focus is on getting good marks/grades rather than on the learning (encouraged by low quality assessments). Effective time management and self-monitoring. Alert to assessment criteria and lecturer preferences.

• **Deep** – *Seeking meaning* - need to understand and make sense, thinking for themselves. Looking for patterns and principles, relating ideas to previous knowledge and experience. Examining argument cautiously and critically.

(Entwistle, McCune & Walker, 2001)
The importance of being clear about what and why we are learning – and making deep demands

The need to ‘make sense’ and ‘make meaning’

– It’s not that I haven’t learned much. It’s just that I don’t understand what I’m doing’ (15 yr old)
– Sir treats us like we’re babies, puts us down, makes us copy stuff off the board, puts up all the answers like we don’t know anything. And we’re not going to learn from that, ‘cause we’ve got to think for ourselves. (low achieving student)
– We knew how to do it. But we didn’t know why we were doing it and we didn’t know how we got around to doing it…..I can get the answer, I just don’t understand why. (maths student)

(source: Jo Boaler)
Being professionals and becoming more expert

...but in the end, if you don’t know the difference between good and bad teaching, if you aren’t aware of the strategies that succeed with students and haven’t learned how to use them, if you do things for fun but that don’t really get students to learn more, then you will sell your students short. Even with the best of intentions, even if you seem like a “natural” as a teacher, unless you deliberately learn how to get better so you can teach the students of today for the world of tomorrow, you will not be teaching like a pro. You will just be an enthusiastic amateur.

(Hargreaves & Fullan)

What do you think are the best ways for us to develop our professional skills?
The need for practice – Anders Ericsson

• Naïve –
  Repeated practice in hope we will get better. ‘Have fun’ practising. Limited improvement.

• Purposeful
  Well designed, specific goals ‘play the piece all the way through at the proper speed three times in a row’.
  Focused practice (risk of ‘try harder’ rather than ‘try differently’)
  Involves feedback – can’t improve without it
  Have to leave comfort zone (problem for doctors & teachers?)

• Deliberate – applies to well-developed field (need to know what expert practice is like) & needs a teacher/mentor
  Outside comfort zone – not fun
  Well-defined, specific goals
  Needs concentration on specific goal
  Involves feedback and modification of efforts in response
  Requires effective mental frameworks

  Doug Lemov – Why don’t teachers practise?
Requires effective mental frameworks 
Involves feedback and modification of efforts in response

Mindsets, high expectations, practice and feedback

• We need to encourage ‘incremental’ mindsets (Dweck)
• Expert teachers make deeper cognitive demands of their pupils (Hattie)
• Do we give enough opportunities to practise what is being learned in a variety of ways? (Gardner)
• Is our feedback specific and clear? (Gamlan and Smith)
Well-defined, specific goals
Needs concentration on specific goal …

The Destination Postcard

• Develop a clear goal – the *Destination Postcard*
  – Write down your specific goals for your leadership/teaching/school over next two years
• How would you get support for this? From whom?
• How do you think it would change pupils’ learning?
‘Shrink the change’

Achievable next steps – avoid ‘decision paralysis’ (eg unproductive planning meetings)

‘When you achieve a little each day, eventually big things occur’ (John Wooden)

‘If you write a page a day you’ll have a 365 page book by the end of the year’ (Donald Freed)

‘Marginal gains’ (5 minute room rescue; AA - One day at a time)

Seeing progress (look for small positive progress)
Change: ‘Smooth the path’

• Leaders need to ‘buy into’ the changes
• Offer group support and professional development
  – Regular meetings – honest discussion (success and failure)
  – Provide information
  – Give specific choices
  – Build on good practice
  – Develop group accountability
TALIS 2013 Views on teacher professional development

‘Teachers, school leaders and policy makers should prioritise professional development activities that take place in school settings and that are sustained, collaborative, and focused on problems of practice’

‘Countries that wish to improve the effectiveness of professional development provided to teachers should increase the amount and variation of school embedded offerings such as mentoring and coaching, creating networks of teachers who learn together, and supporting collaborative research and instructional problem solving by teachers.’

OECD Teaching in Focus 10 (2015)
A final postcard: The successful school

1. Focuses on learning with understanding
2. High expectations from leaders and teachers
3. High cognitive demand in classroom
4. Risk taking – classrooms that are ‘safe to take learning risks’
5. Classroom assessment that encourages deep learning:
   – Good diagnostics & active dialogue
   – Clear learning goals/success criteria
   – Expert feedback - task based, informative, challenging
   – Self and peer assessment – self-regulated learners