

Feedback: giving control to the learner

Ruth Dann

Feedback is one of the ‘tools’ of formative assessment that is regarded as enhancing pupil learning. However, evidence is varied as to the extent that feedback actually makes a difference. The focus in this session is to see how pupils make sense of feedback, particularly pupils who struggle to succeed. We will look at different ways in which teachers and pupils conceptualise how learning progresses and what it is for. We will look at examples of how pupils try to understand the feedback and targets given to them, and try to tease out how a different approach to engaging with learning might be needed giving more attention to the pupils’ perspective. The argument developed synthesises feedback as a ‘deliberative communicative process that requires participation and action by both pupil and teacher’. Furthermore for the pupil it is more than a steer for school learning, it is part of the information used to consider and develop their own identities, choices and understandings, in and beyond school.

Ruth Dann is Senior Lecturer in Curriculum, Pedagogy and Assessment at University College London. Her main area of research is in formative assessment. Her recent book *Developing Feedback for Pupil Learning* (2018) explores feedback relationally, and particularly looks at how pupils make sense of feedback for their learning and their lives. She is deputy editor of the *Journal Education 3-13*, part of the British Curriculum Forum steering group, and is one of the convenors of the BERA Curriculum, Assessment and Pedagogy SIG. She has worked with teachers and leaders to support research engagement in schools and colleges through both the Coalition of Evidence Based Education (CEBE) and The Association for the Study of Primary Education (ASPE).