Feedback on Feedback

Purpose:
To find out what students think about teacher feedback.

Tapping into students’ perceptions.
Students are knowledgeable about the quality of teacher feedback and what helps their learning. This activity helps you find out what students want you to do when giving feedback to them.

What you need:
• a copy of pages 1 & 2 per pair of teachers
• a few blank sheets of A3 paper to plan the questions.

Step 1:
• In pairs, GENERATE a set of questions that you might ask your students in order to gain feedback from them about the feedback they receive from teachers - yourselves in particular.
• CONSIDER these ideas to get you started:
  - What is the best thing for you about the feedback you get from teachers? Why?
  - What is the worst part of it? Why?
  - How could we give you better feedback that helps you improve your learning?
  - If you were giving advice to a new teacher what would you tell them about giving students feedback? or What are the “dos and don’ts” about feedback that all teachers should know?

Step 2:
• REFINE your list by clustering similar ideas, deleting overlaps, etc.
Try to have no more than 8 questions - it gets students past the warm-up questions but is not too time-consuming for them to complete - or for you to analyse later.

Step 3:
• CHOOSE whether it will be best to ask all your students - which will probably mean a survey (written responses) OR to sample a range of different types of students in an informal interview (oral responses).
Step 4:
- PLAN the means of gaining the feedback on feedback.
- ENSURE you are following ETHICAL processes.
Check with a member of the leadership team because you may need to get parental permission e.g. if you want to audio-tape informal interviews with students.

a) Informal Surveys:
Try and fit your questions and space for responses on to one A4 sheet.
Organise when and how you will get the questions to students and how you will get their responses back (anonymously is best e.g. they might post responses in a special box). How and when will you analyse the data?

b) Informal Interviews:
How will you call for volunteers?
You will only need about 4 or 5 pairs of students that are a representative sample of your class(es).
Interviewing students in pairs, or trios, helps them bounce ideas off each other (whereas the whole class discussing at once will not allow all voices to be heard).
Who will do the interviewing? (Yourself? Or interview each other’s students?)
How will you “hear” what students say? Will you reflect back? Take notes?
Remember that you should not audio-tape interviews without written parental permission.
How will you analyse the data?

Step 5:
- ANALYSE the data and PRODUCE a verbal report for your next meeting with the assessment group.
- What ACTIONS will you take as a consequence of what you now know?