

# **An Evaluation Report for the Denial learning resource**

**April 2010**



## 1 Introduction

A recent report published by Stonewall highlighted the fact that 94% of teachers have NOT received training on how to tackle homophobic bullying. The Denial learning resource and professional development training programme offered by Ariel Trust can provide these teachers with a creative tool that can meet this need.

The Denial learning resource is an interactive multimedia education programme designed to raise awareness of and tackle homophobic bullying in secondary schools. The resource includes a short dramatic film designed to introduce the subject and generate discussion. This is then supported by an interactive software package and a structured programme of lessons that enable teachers to explore the issues raised by the film.

An important, innovative element of the programme is that the learning materials are mapped against the Key Stage 3 and 4 English curricula and enables young people to complete a number of pieces of assessed coursework that can contribute towards their final grade. It can also be used to support assessment of Speaking and Listening activities.

The reason the resource has been mapped to the core curriculum this way results from consultation Ariel has conducted with teachers over a number of year. Teachers feel stretched as they are asked to respond to a growing number of social issues. They have limited time to achieve this within PSHE or non-timetabled time. A resource that is mapped against the core curriculum enables teachers to 'kill two birds with one stone', to respond to an important social issue whilst at the same time delivering their key educational outcomes. This approach is proving popular with teachers and local authorities.

*"Mapping the packs against the curriculum is absolute genius"*

**Pete Coulson, Equality & Diversity Officer, Wigan MBC**

## 2 Launch and distribution

The Denial resource was developed with support from 'It's not OK', a violence prevention initiative lead by Liverpool City Council. The resource was launched and distributed to all secondary schools in Liverpool in September 2009 and this report is based on the impacts that have been seen in a small number of schools who have used it since or who were involved in an earlier pilot.

The resource has also been purchased by Wigan MBC. They are currently piloting the programme in Golborne High School and will be rolling it out across the borough during the summer term.



### 3 Faith Schools

A key challenge when seeking to tackle homophobic bullying is engaging faith schools. Homophobia can be, for them, a controversial issue. However a recent statement from the six prominent Church Leaders in Liverpool indicates their support for schools and other community organisation to play a positive role in addressing homophobic bullying.

*“The Leaders of the churches in Liverpool believe that it is wrong for anyone in the community of which we are all part to be victimised, or threatened with victimisation, on account of their race, creed, colour or sexual orientation. We affirm our commitment to work with others to build a community where all can have their place of belonging, feel welcome and live in safety”*

We have piloted Denial with a Catholic School in Liverpool, St Francis Xavier. This pilot proved highly successful and demonstrates that the resource can be easily used in a faith school.

*“I can highly recommend this film and resource pack to any English department. Our pupils loved it – they found it new, exciting, informative and were full of praise for the cutting-edge activities the pack provided. The graphics and activities are clever, but so is the way in which these sensitive topics are handled. The film and resource pack have both style and substance.*

*I hope your teachers and pupils enjoy this multimedia package as much as we did at our school!”*

**Mr L Rippon  
Head Teacher  
St. Francis Xavier’s College,  
Liverpool**

### 4 Attitudinal Change

Homophobic Bullying remains a serious problem in our school. The findings of the NUT study launched in May 2010 by Jeff Evans, North West LGBT Co-ordinator for the NUT highlights the extent of the problem.

A number of important reports point to reasons why educational resources like Denial can have a positive impact on bullying.

Delivering the Denial resource will demonstrate a school’s commitment to tackling homophobic bullying and will encourage more young people to report incidents of bullying. This can be illustrated by a quote taken from Liverpool City Council’s Bullying Audit 2009.



*“Whether or not pupils feel that their school deals well with bullying doesn’t impact upon the proportion of pupils that have been bullied, but it does affect how badly it affects those that have been bullied”*

This report found that 79% of young people would report an incident of bullying in a school where the issue was dealt with well and only 59% in a school that they felt dealt with it poorly.

We believe that initiatives like the development of the Denial resource can have a positive influence in reducing bullying over time. Liverpool City Council’s Bullying Audit of 2009 shows a 3% decrease in the incidents of bullying reported by young people. At the same time it showed an increase of 17% in the number of young people who told teachers about bullying. Both results can be attributed to positive anti-bullying initiatives in Liverpool, including the development of Denial. This is a positive first step and demonstrates the potential that could be achieved by engaging schools in a sustainable educational initiative like Denial.

## **5 Academic Impact**

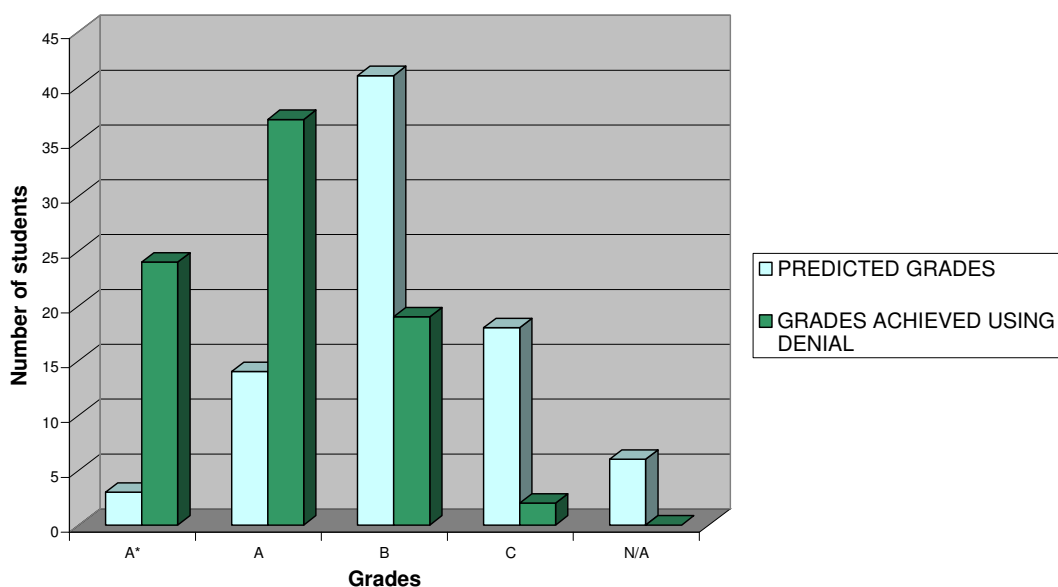
An important element of the Denial programme is its ability to deliver academic impacts as well as social change. This enables the resource to support teachers to meet their Government targets in relation to English, Maths and Science rather than feeling like another burden on their already stretched time.

The initial results that we have obtained from two schools show how effective Denial is at motivating young people to achieve in their coursework. Both schools have used the Denial resource with a whole year group, demonstrating the resource is effective across all ability levels.

### **Case Study 1: Belvedere Y 10: Speaking and Listening Results**

The following graph shows the results achieved by pupils at Belvedere School in a piece of Speaking and Listening coursework. The light green bars represent predicted grades whilst the dark green bar shows the actual results. It is clear that the pupils performed above expectations across the entire group.

- 75% of students achieved an A or A\*
- There were eight times more A\*s than predicted
- In addition there were more than double the number of A’s than predicted



**Case Study 2: Rainhill High School Y 9: Speaking and Listening Results**

Similar results were seen in a second school, Rainhill High with 75% of pupils meeting or exceeding their target grades. Head of English, Steve Talbot attributes these results to the fact that Denial provides an ‘above average scheme of work’.

*"With an average scheme of work you would obviously expect the same number of pupils to be above target grades as below target grades. You can therefore see how well our pupils did."*

**Steve Talbot, Head of English, Rainhill High School**

**Results data**

hit target level = 63			32%
above target level = 84			43%
below target level = 49			25%