



Welcome to the July issue of the BeYou BeAwesome Spaces newsletter, the monthly schools' newsletter from [The BeYou Project](#) team.

It may not be Pride month any more, but we can still support and celebrate our LGBTQ+ friends across Kent and Medway.

Celebrate

Omnisexual Visibility Day: 6 July

Omnisexuality is an underrepresented identity where an individual is attracted to people of all genders, where gender still plays a role in their attraction to a person. It is often incorrectly used interchangeably with pansexuality. Use this day as an opportunity to learn more about omnisexuality and combat the stigma.

International Non-Binary Day: 14 July

The 2021 UK Census showed that at least 30,000 people in the UK identified as non-binary, meaning that their gender is not one of the two genders that make up the traditional gender binary of 'male' and 'female'.



This day is an opportunity to raise awareness about various non-binary identities and celebrate the contributions that non-binary people have made to our society.

Use the day to get a conversation going about non-binary representation (you might want to use celebrities like Miley Cyrus and Sam Smith as an example) and do fun activities like creating pronoun pins.

International Drag Day: 16 July



Drag performance has been featuring in the news a lot recently, but its social and cultural impact has been noted for centuries.

From Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* to Princess Seraphina of the 18th century, drag is not a new phenomenon and has even influenced modern language through shows like Ru Paul's *Drag Race*.

You might consider using drag as a lens of exploration for media studies, English literature and language, and history.

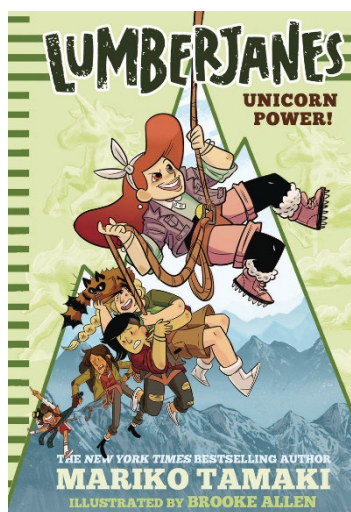
Get involved

Kent Prides: throughout July

Pride month may be over, but Pride events throughout Kent are just getting started!

Next up is Deal Pride (15 July), then Dartford (22 July), and then Folkestone and Faversham on the same day (29 July). The BeYou Project will have a stall at each of these events, so please do come and find us! We'd love to say hello and have a chat.

Queer book of the month



Lumberjanes: Unicorn Power! By Mariko Tamaki

This book follows the Lumberjanes, a group of scouts who are passionate about friendship and solving mysteries.

With trans, non-binary and lesbian representation as well as a diverse range of racial identities represented, this novelised spin-off of the eponymous comic book series is a fun and quirky read for young people aged 10-14.

Knowledge is power

How can I respond when a young person makes a homophobic or transphobic joke?

We've often heard the phrase 'dark sense of humour' – where someone uses jokes to process difficult topics.

Comedians go viral for making transphobic and homophobic jokes, and some young people may repeat what they've heard or make offensive jokes of their own. If you hear a homophobic or transphobic joke while at work, refer to your school or organisation's behaviour policy.

For what to do immediately after hearing the joke, the Anti-Defamation League in the US suggests a three-step process: take a moment and pause, diagnose and determine what is happening, respond and engage.

First, breathe for a moment. Then, determine the intent behind the joke. Consider what's been said, and if it needs to be dealt with privately or publicly. Finally, check on the people who might have been harmed by the joke, and think about whether it's possible to use the opportunity as a teachable moment.

You could try using "I feel" statements, such as "I feel a responsibility to address that comment, which I feel is a harmful thing to say". You could also try using "I wonder" statements, which are a great way to put an idea out there without making any assumptions, for example "I

wonder whether anyone in the room might have found that joke uncomfortable”.

Ask questions that encourage self-reflection – you might galvanise a great discussion! Don't be afraid to have these conversations; not only are you showing support for students within the LGBTQ+ community, but you are empowering those who might be doing harm to make positive changes.

Get in touch

The BeYou Project offers LGBTQ+ youth groups, assemblies and advocacy in schools, and one-to-one support for LGBTQ+ young people.

For support and advice, please email us at beyou@porchlight.org.uk and one of our friendly team will be in touch.

Visit thebeyouproject.co.uk/meets for details of our group meets for young people.

You can also follow us on Instagram at [instagram.com/beyoukent](https://www.instagram.com/beyoukent)