



BeAwesome Spaces

Creating LGBTQ+ spaces in education for young people

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

Happy Pride Month! Throughout June, we observe and celebrate LGBTQ+ achievements and historical moments in the UK.

Celebrating Pride

The Gay Liberation Front started Pride in the UK in the early 1970s, inspired by the US Stonewall Riots in 1969, a series of protests by members of the gay community in response to a police raid of the Stonewall Inn in New York City.

What began as a protest against the inequalities faced by the community has developed into an opportunity to advocate for global LGBTQ+ rights, celebrate the diversity of our community, and honour the legacies of activists who came before us.



Fly the progress flag

This flag is used to represent the whole LGBTQ+ community. It's an updated version of the original rainbow flag, and it champions the many intersecting identities in the community.

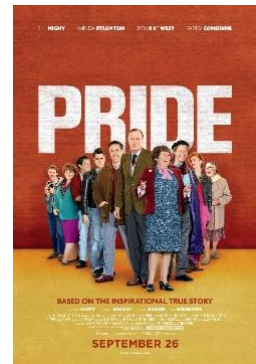
This Pride Month, don't be afraid to hang a progress flag and celebrate! Whether it's a flag representing your own Pride or one flown in allyship, your choice to display the colours of the queer community will make a difference.

You could also consider setting up a BeYou BeAwesome space in your school to support your LGBTQ+ students further. [Contact us](#) to find out more.

Pride (2014)

Pride is a 2014 British historical comedy-drama film written by Stephen Beresford and directed by Matthew Warchus.

Based on a true story, it depicts a group of lesbian and gay activists who raised money to help families affected by the British miners' strike in 1984, at the outset of what would become the Lesbians and Gays Support the Miners campaign.



Why not incorporate the film into a lesson this month?

Pride events

Pride events in Kent and Medway kick off this month, with Canterbury leading the way on 10 and 11 June.

The BeYou Project will be taking part in most events, including the marches, and we'll have a stall so we can chat to people who are interested in our service.

Some of the young people who attend our youth groups will also be 'hanging out' at our stand. If you're a bit nervous about going to a Pride event, or if you just think it would be nice to come and find a friendly face, look out for us and come and say hello.

Knowledge is power

Pinkwashing – what is it?

During Pride month, many organisations sell Pride merchandise and change their logos to incorporate Pride colours.

The positive side of this is that it brings Pride into the mainstream in a way that would have been unimaginable just a short time ago. When big brands and retailers celebrate Pride, it sends a message of welcome and acceptance in public spaces. This helps Pride's message reach people who might otherwise miss it.

On the other hand, some of the so-called support offered by businesses can be misleading – the term 'pinkwashing' is used to describe this.

Pinkwashing happens when brands claim to be LGBTQ+ allies, but in practice do little or nothing to support LGBTQ+ people. Before buying a Pride product, check the label. If it has no reference to supporting an LGBTQ+ initiative or charity, then it's likely they are simply trying to profit from Pride.

We've only scratched the surface of a big issue, here – are Pride celebrations always progressive, or can they be exploitative? Opening up a discussion, in a classroom or just informally, can be a great way to explore some new perspectives.

Key dates

5–11 June: Child Safety Week

LGBTQ+ young people are disproportionately affected by violent bullying at school. The statistics on this vary, but it's something we're sadly familiar with at The BeYou Project – it's real, and it happens in schools across Kent.

While we always work towards prevention first, it's good to be prepared for any eventuality. Organised by the Child Accident Prevention Trust, this year's theme is 'safety made simple'. While the resource bank for practitioners is related more to those working with younger children, the themes addressed can hit PSHE/RSE outcomes, particularly in relation to practical first aid. The BBC Teach website has a video titled 'Essential First Aid with Dr Emeka' that is especially useful for UKS2/KS3

and addresses issues such as delivering CPR, bleeding and shock, and bone fractures.

21 June: National Writing Day

Throughout history, LGBTQ+ authors have made tremendous contributions to the arts world, from Oscar Wilde to Alice Oseman. The benefits of self-expression through writing are proven to have a positive impact on young people's mental health. You can incorporate this into your English lessons, from studying the works of LGBTQ+ authors, to encouraging your pupils to write stories or poems around themes of identity, self-expression and pride. The options are endless!

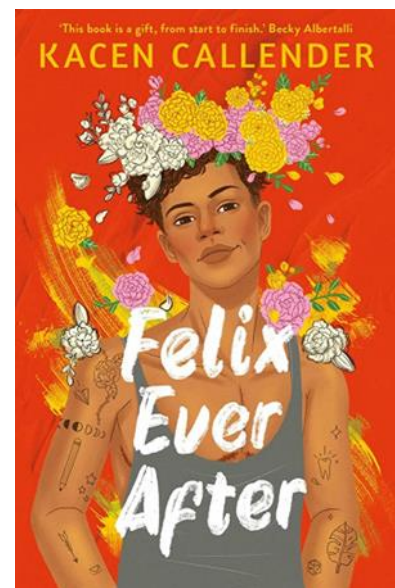


Queer book of the month

Felix Ever After by Kacen Callender

Felix Love has never been in love – and, yes, he's painfully aware of the irony. He desperately wants to know what it's like and why it seems so easy for everyone but him to find someone. What's worse is that, even though he is proud of his identity, Felix also secretly fears that he's one marginalization too many – Black, queer, and transgender – to ever get his own happily-ever-after.

When an anonymous student begins sending him transphobic messages – after publicly posting Felix's deadname alongside images of him before he transitioned – Felix comes up with a plan for revenge. What he didn't count on: his catfish scenario landing him in a quasi-love triangle.



Aimed at secondary school ages, 14+.

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)