



## **BeAwesome Spaces**

Creating LGBTQ+ spaces in education for young people

Welcome to the February schools' newsletter from [The BeYou Project](#).

Love is in the air this month with Valentine's Day just around the corner. It's the perfect time to celebrate queer romance, and to remember that some queer people are not interested in romance at all! It's the perfect month to show love and respect for the past, as February is also LGBTQ+ History Month.

### **Celebrate**

#### **LGBT+ History Month**

LGBT+ History Month is celebrated every February across the UK and was founded in 2004 by Schools OUT.

This year's theme is #UnderTheScope, celebrating LGBTQ+ peoples' contribution to the field of medicine and healthcare both historically and today.

You can learn more about LGBT+ History Month, including links to social media and resources, [here](#).

## Valentine's Day: 14 February

Valentine's Day is a chance for loved-up couples to celebrate, and for unspoken crushes to come to light! This day can feel challenging for many LGBTQ+ young people, as celebrating their relationship or sharing their crush might not feel possible.

A way to help everyone feel loved on Valentine's Day is to organise a 'love letter to myself' activity – as Oscar Wilde said, "to love oneself is the beginning of a lifelong romance".

## Aromantic Spectrum Awareness Week: 18 – 24 February

People on the aromantic spectrum don't experience romantic attraction, or experience it very rarely.

With Valentine's Day just past, this week is a chance to spread the word that a life without a romantic connection can be whole, satisfying and beautiful.



## Queer culture of the month

### The Owl House

Created by bisexual writer Dana Terrace, The Owl House is a fun and lighthearted cartoon packed with LGBTQ+ characters. The two main characters are bisexual, and there's an aromantic character, a non-binary character, a lesbian character... the list goes on!



It's a startling amount of queer representation to see in one show, and credit must go to Dana Terrace's strength of character: when the studio was ready to shut down any gay relationships for the main characters, Dana said, "I let myself get mad, to absolutely blow up, and storm out of the room. Life is short and I don't have time for cowardice, I was ready to move on to greener pastures if need be."

The studio reached out a week or two later to green-light the relationships Dana had written into the story. Her determination to represent the community and write her own story is an inspiration to all of us. We can learn from her that when we're disrespected because of our identity, we're allowed to feel and show indignance – and if something isn't right, it's possible to create change.

## **Understanding is power**

### **Why do we still need Pride?**

What comes to mind when you think about Pride? You might picture a scene encompassing dazzling colours, glittery banners and people dressed in costume – all enveloped in music, light, and sound.

Nowadays, Pride has an overtone of celebration. It's a time to get together with friends, party, and to celebrate being you. But it's important to remember that celebrating authenticity, selfhood, identity, and community is for many people a radical act – especially for those who are marginalised, excluded or actively persecuted.

The first Pride march in London was held on 1 July 1972. The organisers wanted a peaceful demonstration that drew attention to the harassment of gay and lesbian people by the police. It was a way for marginalised groups of queer people to come together and say collectively that this treatment was unfair.

Even now there are groups within the queer community that are much maligned and experience considerable discrimination, misunderstanding, and even hatred. In 2022– 23, Galop reported that trans people experienced an 11% increase in hate crimes in England and Wales, and in the last two years they estimate an overall increase of 37.5% in generalised anti-LGBTQ+ hate in the UK. This means that, now more than ever, it's important to remember why Pride exists – as a space for communities to come together, be visible, and advocate for a society in which everyone is free to be themselves without being subject to persecution, violence, or hatred.

## **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](mailto:beyou@porchlight.org.uk) and one of our friendly team will be in touch.

Visit [thebeyouproject.co.uk/meets](http://thebeyouproject.co.uk/meets) for details of our term-time group meets for young people.

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

This month's newsletter was put together by Em and Imogen.

Follow us on social media



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