

## **If I ruled the world... well OK, Scotland ...**

*By Melissa Duff*

If I ruled the world... well OK, Scotland ... I would love to help children with disabilities, whether it be mental or physical to be socialized with children who don't have any sort of disability. Children who have disabilities should be able to socialize and have a normal schooling life. I think if we slowly started to mix the children at a young age it would benefit them. In an ideal school of this sort it would be equip to the highest extent for children with any disabilities so if that meant having everything on the one floor one floor that's how it would be, there would be on hand nurses to help with everything and to distribute medicines.

Personally I think that if children without disabilities were schooled with the children who do, they would understand that they never asked for that and it wasn't a choice that they made, they didn't ask to not be in the mainstream schooling system or to be treated differently because of disability. Would you like to be treated differently? I think mainstream school for everyone would be a much better idea than having them separate. It would teach them to be more accepting and kind.

In addition to having mixed schools I think schools, hospices and community centres should have green areas for the children. A place for them all to get dirty without getting in trouble, a place for them to relax or make friends. They could grow some veggies or fruit and that would give them some responsibility. Gardening has been proven to be good for your mental health. Gardening is an easy activity but you could let out some anger if you really wanted to. Gardening would benefit children who can't 100% see or hear because they could smell the flowers, taste the food they have grown, feel the mud and fresh air and hear the birds. This would be an amazing relaxation time or socializing time.

Not to mention the tremendous work that hospices do. They ensure that children and their families have a special. They offer both a chance to relax and spend time together. I think hospices and community centres should be more open to the idea of having more open days where the children can interact and become friends.

In conclusion I would love if children were mixed more. For open days at schools, hospices and community centres or gardening together to become more mainstream. Everyone should have an equal life whether it be having a mental illness like schizophrenia to being paralyzed, blindness to deafness, it doesn't matter because every living thing should be treated with respect and dignity. I think children with and without disabilities, should be socialized and mainstream schooled and they would become more accepting people! So that's how I would make Scotland better by making the younger generation a more accepting kind group of people because everyone deserves the best life! And if I won the competition, I would choose people to come with me that reflected this idea.

I would take Alyssa Bell, Amy Reid, Emma Partridge, Tiegan Huxtable, Paige Millar, Alex-Leigh Henry, Christopher Wood, Elle Paterson.