

Ceilidh with Best Buddies

On 5 December, University of Edinburgh society Best Buddies will host a pioneering 'friendship ceilidh'.

The society is part of the international Best Buddies community, which aims to promote social inclusivity for people with learning disabilities. In its biggest community event to date, the 'life-changing' university society will welcome members of the public to enjoy a knees-up at Edinburgh's ENABLE centre.

A socially inclusive ceilidh probably shouldn't be a news story – but sadly, Scotland has some way to go when it comes to including people with IDD (intellectual and developmental disabilities). According to ENABLE's website, in Scotland an estimated 120,000 children and adults have learning disabilities.

Of these, 93% of children with a learning disability are bullied and only 1 in 3 individuals with a learning disability is able to name one close friend. Every week, the University of Edinburgh Best Buddies social evening brings local people with learning disabilities and students together to build friendship and understanding. By doing so, it makes steps towards a community which values and recognises all of its members.

Fundraising and publicity officer Brenna Aston was inspired to organise the ceilidh after a trip to the USA for the Best Buddies leadership conference this summer. The 21-year-old sociology student says: 'The friendships that we have at Best Buddies are special, and seeing the happiness Best Buddies brings to all of its students and members has been a real pleasure to be a part of. We are so grateful to ENABLE Edinburgh (SC016961) for making it possible.' The society plan to use proceeds from the ceilidh to fund more activities and

social events for their members.

Best Buddies welcomes everyone to their friendship ceilidh, which will be the first of its kind. Music will be provided by the talented Edinburgh University Folk Society, while a number of local businesses have contributed food for a cold buffet.

The Best Buddies ceilidh will be held at the ENABLE hall, 95 Causewayside Road, Edinburgh on 5 December. Doors open at 7pm for a 7.30pm start. Tickets are £6, all proceeds to Best Buddies at Enable Edinburgh. Tickets available on the door.

Submitted by [Ceris Aston](#)