




# Project Eden

## Sensory Play Garden

### St Vincents Centre Development Education Centre

RESPECT is raising funds to support the DEC. Our current project is an accessible outdoor sensory and play garden. The cost is €180,000 and we hope to start work in August 2021





**Project Eden aims to create an accessible and enjoyable outdoor garden space for 32 children who have severe/profound intellectual disabilities. The garden would afford each child the opportunity to participate in creative play, gardening and enjoy out-door physio sessions.**

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## Message from Sr Zoe, Director of RESPECT CLG



RESPECT is embarking on a sensory garden project with the **Developmental Educational Centre** at St Vincents Navan Road which provides service to 32 children on a daily basis.

RESPECT provides support through fundraising to improve the lives of people with intellectual disability within The Daughters of Charity Disability Support Service. We do this by improving the surroundings and the independence of service users through various projects. Project Eden has been designed and promoted by parents and staff at the centre and we are raising funds so that work can start in the coming months. The garden will allow children who have profound to severe intellectual disabilities combined with medical conditions and other complex needs to engage their senses in a wonderful outdoor environment.

Over the past 25 years RESPECT ([www.respect.ie](http://www.respect.ie)) has helped with many developments to achieve the dreams and hopes of the people who avail of the service each day. We are appealing to your generosity and we hope that you will support this exciting project which through sensory play will bring much joy and happiness, along with promoting physical and emotional wellbeing and further enhance the quality of life for the many children who will benefit from Project EDEN.

We have listened to some of the children's stories and the many opportunities the sensory garden would bring to their lives allowing them to have fun, develop and express themselves.

This brochure will bring you up to date on Project Eden and how you can help to make this happen,

Thank you  
**Sr. Zoë Killeen**  
Director



# What is a sensory garden?

A sensory garden is a garden environment that is designed with the purpose of stimulating and engaging the five basic senses of sight, smell, sound, touch, and taste.

Everyone takes from the garden what they need and want. And every day in the garden is a time to experience peace and joy.

This stimulation occurs courtesy of plants and the use of materials, equipment, and other accessories.

While in the garden, people are encouraged to touch, smell, taste, see, and hear and to generally interact with the environment around them. These types of gardens are popular with, and beneficial to, children who have intellectual disabilities, sensory processing issues, and other complex needs.

As examples for people who are hyper-reactive to stimuli, the sensory garden can provide a relaxing environment, and for people who tend to be under-reactive to stimuli, the garden is a great way to stimulate the senses. One child may run their hand through water and receive a calming sensory input, while another child may receive an awakening and energy sensory input, while another may avoid water completely as they may not be able to tolerate the touch or sound of water.

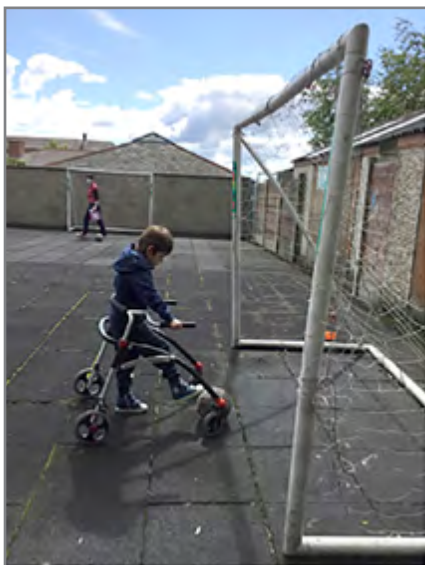
A sensory garden is a calming place and a gentle way to stimulate the senses. This type of environment can become a place where people with intellectual disabilities and complex needs, feel safe and comfortable in exploring their senses without feeling overwhelmed by them.

A sensory garden is a place of fun, tranquility, learning, and stimulation, and can promote physical and emotional wellbeing. Reducing stress and anxiety are key benefits.



# Why we need a garden

## 6 Children tell their story



*My physio sessions are fun outside*



*Sitting in the garden makes me happy*



*I like playing music indoors and outdoors*

“

*I need a garden that lets me forget about being sick. I am in and out of hospital a lot so don't get much time to play with my friends in the DEC. When I do I am the best fun to be around. I just got a new wheel chair that I can propel myself. I need a garden that I can explore, dig and plant things. I love messy play, the messier the better!*

**Emily**

”

“

*I need a garden that I can access as I am in a wheel chair most of the time. I need a garden that I can explore with all my senses. I wear glasses as I have very bad eye sight and find it difficult to see things. I can't speak to tell people around me what I want so I need to be offered lots of different opportunities to play and have fun as I can't do it myself.*

**John**

”

“

*I am a very busy, independent girl and I like to move a lot. I am getting better at balancing and running. I need a garden that I can run, jump, climb and play in. I need a garden that challenges me and gives me lots of opportunities to develop my skills. I love water play and music.*

**Susan**

”



## At Present


The current space that is utilised in the DEC is a patio area located outside each class room. Unfortunately this area is not a suitable surface for wheelchairs, trikes or walkers (children using walkers would need a flat surface with no trip hazards).

This patio area is an essential space which could potentially enhance the quality of life of the children attending the DEC. This would afford each child the opportunity to participate in creative play, gardening or the space could be used for out-door physio sessions. This area is currently severely under utilised but we hope this can change.



The patio area is not a creative and inviting space.

- » Many of the children that access our service have reduced opportunities for outdoor play. This can be due to illness and hospital stays.
- » The children in DEC frequently spend many hours each month attending therapy and medical appointments. This often reduces the time available to their parents and carers to bring them to parks and playgrounds. In some instances, children live in apartments or emergency accommodation that does not provide garden access.
- » Community play spaces are not always fully accessible to children who attend the DEC. Children with significant mobility and/or sensory impairments require a garden or outdoor area that enables them to participate in play.
- » Children attending DEC require a garden and place that is wheelchair accessible that encompasses all the senses.
- » Outdoor play time helps to build self-esteem and positively impacts cognitive and social development. The children who attend the DEC have the right to social inclusion and opportunity to engage in an environment that meets their physical and cognitive needs.
- » The sensory garden is designed to support development of core skills such as movement, communication, sensory development and hand function in a context and manner that is meaningful to the child. The garden will offer appropriate space for approach, reach, manipulation and use regardless of the child's size, posture or mobility. It will provide an environment for graduated challenge, while facilitating independent use.

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- » Given that many of the children experience decreased use or loss of certain senses, engagement with sensory gardens can allow access to unique sensory inputs, nature and sunlight. This can increase sensation or dull hypersensitivity to affected limbs.
  - » Within the sensory garden, meaningful task performance associated with gardening can reduce negative behaviours, and providing regulated engagement of the senses for agitation.
  - » Sensory gardens and the act of gardening have been widely documented to reduce behaviours of agitation and aggression. This garden area will be provided to children who would benefit from a fresh air to relieve tension and a calm quiet place to help them to regulate. Elements such as water features, music and natural sounds, and the smells of floral plants will influence these calming sensations.
  - » Outdoor play activities have been shown to increase children's physical/cardiovascular fitness and to positively influence mental health, self-esteem and stress reduction. Poor design can result in children expending unnecessary effort accessing and using play spaces with little energy left for play and skills development.
  - » The proposed play space will be located in the grounds of DEC and will be convenient for children and families attending our service for therapy or medical appointments.
  - » It is envisaged that using the garden will be a vital element of the daily routine of children attending DEC.

## Project Timeline

- Consultation process for staff and families October 2019 - completed
- Preliminary costing November 2019 – completed
- Fundraising team formed with Respect-April 2021
- Design Team appointed -April 2021
- Launch of fundraising drive- May 2021
- Project Tendering process- May/June 2021
- Proposed appointment of Contractor- July 2021 Subject to funding
- Work on site August 2021- DEC Holiday period
- Completion of works/play equipment and landscaping-September/October 2021



# The Proposal

The new garden space is located in the area between the existing building and the Western Boundary of the campus cleared incorporate the existing grass bank and trees. This will provide more light and make the space more open and inviting.

Opportunities are provided to locate sculpture for visual interest and ornamental lighting. There is a change in level between this existing bank and the building and a retaining wall at seating height .

A level surface will be provided throughout the space for easier movement and with provide access from all doors, linking the entire garden with the building. Planters with carefully selected plants will be provided throughout the space, which will be both accessible and provide visual interest. A cantilevered pergola is located at the wider end of the space.

The building facades will also be used where possible for vertical elements and to display items. An interactive water feature will be specially designed to encourage sound and touch. This, along with the other elements have been chosen/ designed along with the staff and the multi disciplinary team

Given the limited nature of the site, movement throughout the space is the primary goal, while providing as much varied stimulation and interest for the children.





# Fundraising

The total cost is estimated at €180,000. To date €40,000 raised through its fundraising operation has been contributed by RESPECT. This is based on design proposals by the architect developed with the DEC team. This figure includes vat, specialised play and activity equipment and professional fees which reflect considerable goodwill in the evolution of the project.

The project will be procured and overseen by the HSE Section 38 Daughters of Charity Disability Support Service who staff and operate the Centre. Much of the work will have to take place when the Centre is closed for holidays in August.

In addition to RESPECT financial support is being sought from Donations may be made directly to RESPECT at [respect.ie](http://respect.ie) or by contacting the Respect office at 087 904 7921, National Funds available for projects of this type, Individual and corporate sponsors and a JustGiving campaign to be launched in late May.

**JustGiving™** [www.justgiving.com/campaign/project-eden](http://www.justgiving.com/campaign/project-eden)

The JustGiving campaign is being promoted through social media, contacts in the broadcast and print media, advertising and through the support base of RESPECT including promotion through its shops. You can donate by going to [JustGiving.com](http://JustGiving.com)

This project cannot be commenced unless funding is in position.

## Company Donation

If a company donates to a charity €250 or more in a year, then the company can claim a tax deduction as if the donation was a trading expense.

## Individual Donation:

If an individual donates to a charity €250 or more in a year, then the charity can claim the tax relief. The relief is calculated by grossing up the donation at the current rate of 31%. E.g., if an individual donates €1,000 in a tax year the charity gets the benefit of €1,000 plus the tax relief of €449.27, totalling €1,449.27.

There is a choice of forms, one that is valid for one year, or one that is valid for 5 years. The forms are called:

- » [Enduring C financial support is being sought from certificate – CHY3 Certificate](#) valid for a period five years
- » [Annual Certificate – CHY4 Certificate](#) valid for a period of one year.



# The Project EDEN Team

**The Vision for the project comes from the staff and parents at The DEC. It is inspired by the resilience and aspirations of the children and their families.**

## Fundrasing Team

- ▶ Mary Crotty (mary@crottycomms.ie)
- ▶ Michele Giblin (gibmich5@gmail.com)
- ▶ Rhoda Judge (rhoda.judge@docservice.ie)
- ▶ Noel Kidney (kidney.noel@gmail.com)
- ▶ Zoe Killeen, Director of RESPECT (zoe.killeen@respect.ie)
- ▶ John Larson Communications Manager DoCDSS (john.larson@docservice.ie)
- ▶ Conor Mallaghan (conor@carton.ie)
- ▶ Tommy O Reilly (tommyoreilly@roccul.com)
- ▶ Mary Rush (mary.rush@docservice.ie)

## Design and Development Team

- ▶ Simone Kennedy Landscape Architect
- ▶ Derek Tallant (Derek.Tallant@docservice.ie)
- ▶ David Turner Quantity Surveyor



view of proosed garden



# Donations

## How you can help

Financial Donations can be made as follows:

► **JustGiving**

» Campaign: [www.justgiving.com/campaign/project-eden](http://www.justgiving.com/campaign/project-eden)

► **By Cheque to RESPECT CLG**

» Can be posted to: RESPECT CLG  
» St. Vincent's Centre, Navan Road  
» Dublin 7 D07 X051

► **By Phone**

» Payment can be received over the phone to:  
» Maria Dunphy / Gillian Wynne - (01) 6856 502

► **By Transfer**

» IBAN: IE98 AIBK 9322 8017 8770 31  
» BIC: AIBKIE2D  
» Account Name: RESPECT CLG

► **Online (Stripe / Paypal)**

» Respect website: [www.respect.ie/donate](http://www.respect.ie/donate)

► **Tax relief for Charitable Donations (PAYE)**

» [www.revenue.ie](http://www.revenue.ie)  
» CHY4 – Annual Certificate  
» Can be posted to the address above or emailed to: [gwynne@respect.ie](mailto:gwynne@respect.ie)





Colourful, composite pergola to create a more private outdoor classroom space with scope for hanging colourful, shiny objects for added interest. Smaller structures span across the site to both define and unite the space.



Textural and seasonal planting to create interest. Use of



Plantings used to screen and define the play area as well as adding sound and movement to the space.



The creation of a winding path using resin bound gravel to help unite the entire garden area along



Zones of artificial grass for students to use all year round to play or lie down. Paved with paving to allow accessibility to wheelchair users.



Seating in keeping with planter design - simple, but effective and made from durable materials.



Brightly painted round planters in a variety of sizes. Students can use some planters to grow vegetables with built-in seating provided throughout the space. Some planters could be tapered to allow for easier wheelchair access.



**WE NEED YOUR HELP**  
**Please DONATE at**



**JustGiving™**

**[www.justgiving.com/campaign/project-eden](http://www.justgiving.com/campaign/project-eden)**

## **RESPECT**

RESPECT is a registered charity and provides support and funding to improve the lives of people with intellectual disability in the care of the Daughters of Charity service. We do this by improving the surroundings and the independence of service users, through capital building projects and ground breaking research initiatives.

## **Daughters of Charity Disability Support Service**

The Daughters of Charity Disability Support Services are one of the largest providers of support to people with intellectual disability on the north side of Dublin. We support people of various ages with a moderate, severe and profound disability. Our goal is for every person to achieve a life of their choosing.

## **Development Education Centre**

The Development Education Centre (DEC) is part of the Daughters of Charity and is located on the grounds of St Vincent's Centre, Navan Road, Dublin 7. It is a specialist school service for children from 5 to 18 years of age with severe/profound Intellectual Disabilities. Currently there are 32 children attending the DEC, the majority of the children have significant physical disabilities and many have life limiting conditions.

**RESPECT CLG**

**[www.respect.ie](http://www.respect.ie)**