

Bright Sparks of Our Future!

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My name is Naoimh Riordan and I am the Vice Principal of Rockboro Primary School in Cork City, South of Ireland. I am a full time class primary teacher and I teach 4th class, my students are aged between 9-10 years. My passion for education has developed over the years and grown towards STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) subjects. I believe these subjects are the way forward for our future.

My passion and beliefs are driven by the unique after school programme that I have developed. It is titled “Sparks” coming from the term Bright Sparks. “Sparks” is an after school programme with a difference where the STEM subjects are concentrated on through lessons such as Science, Veterinary Science Computer Animation /Coding, Eco engineering, Robotics, Magical Maths, Chess and Creative Writing. All these subjects are taught through activity based learning and are one-hour long each week for a ten-week term. “Sparks” is fully inclusive and non-selective which gives all students of any level of ability an opportunity to engage into these subjects. “Sparks” is open to all primary students in County Cork.

The “Sparks” after school programme is taught by tutors from the different Universities and Colleges in Cork City. It works very well because the tutor brings their knowledge, skills and specialised equipment from their respective universities and in turn the tutor gains invaluable teaching practise, can trial a pilot programme in a chosen STEM subject and gain an insight into what works in the physical classroom.