

# WAVES AND WONDERS



A TAP+ CREATIVE PROJECT  
PRESENTED BY



TEACHER OONAGH GILSENAN  
ARTIST REBECCA MAGUIRE



Clár Éire Ildánach  
*Creative Ireland*  
Programme





Oonagh Gilsean is a primary school teacher with experience since 2001, active in Ireland and abroad. Teaching in Navan since 2009, she currently instructs 25 Senior Infants. Oonagh has a strong passion for arts in education, focusing on visual arts, traditional music, and choral singing. Through the TAP+ programme and collaboration with pebble artist Rebecca Maguire, Oonagh encourages her students to use natural materials for creative artwork, fostering creativity, curiosity, and joy in the process.

**OONAGH GILSEAN**  
**NAVAN EDUCATE TOGETHER N.S**



Rebecca Maguire, an artist and TAP+ Artist based in Meath, specialises in pebble and mixed media art using natural materials. During her Waves and Wonders residency at Navan Educate Together, she collaborated with Senior Infants to transform ordinary stones into imaginative characters and games. Her work highlights the "pure state of play," showcasing how creativity can turn simple pebbles into remarkable art.



**REBECCA MAGUIRE**  
**PÚRÓGA PEBBLE ART**



## WELCOME MESSAGE

Waves And Wonders was a TAP+ (Teacher–Artist Partnership)

The TAP+ programme creates a space where teaching and artistic practice come together. In this shared learning environment, children are encouraged to explore, imagine, experiment and express themselves through creativity. Through our Waves & Wonders project, the Senior Infants worked alongside their teacher Oonagh Gilsean and pebble artist Rebecca Maguire to discover how small natural objects can become powerful tools for storytelling, play and art.

This presentation captures the spirit of that journey.



## OUR CREATIVE JOURNEY

Our project began with a special Meet the Artist day with pebble artist Rebecca Maguire. The children explored examples of her artwork and discovered how simple natural pebbles can be transformed into pictures, characters and stories. This inspired us to imagine what we could create ourselves.





## TELL A STORY WITH PEBBLES

As part of our creative journey, Rebecca made a personalised pebble character for each child. This special introduction showed how a simple pebble can be transformed into something unique and meaningful. The children were excited to recognise themselves in their characters and to see how different shapes, sizes and arrangements can tell a story. Using these pebble characters, Rebecca created and shared a story with the class. This brought the pebbles to life and sparked the children's imaginations, inspiring them to begin creating their own pebble ideas.



This moment helped the children to see themselves as artists and storytellers.



# STORYTELLING WITH PEBBLES: MEET YOUR CHARACTER

## The Instructions

Inside your basket, find envelope #1

In that envelope you'll find wooden discs and pebbles, each person take one pebble and one disc.

The "First Letter" Challenge: Use the first initial of your name to inspire a character.

(e.g., Diane the Daisy or Simon the Spider).

The Transformation: Paint the pebble as the focal point (the face or body) and use the disc to draw the rest. You'll find acrylic paint pens and the glue in the basket.

The Final Touch: A dot of glue to secure them, and don't forget to write your name!



**ONE TABLE, ONE STORY...  
YOUR NEXT!**



# KILLINEY BEACH PEBBLE EXPLORATION DAY

A key part of the Waves and Wonders project was a special trip to Killiney Beach, Dublin where the children engaged all their senses as they explored the magic of the seaside. The children also collected pebbles to use in the Waves and Wonders project.



At the Beach we,

- Looked
- Listened
- Explored
- Foraged
- Remembered



Can you build a pebble tower?



The Pebble Treasure Hunt



Colourful Seaweed



Driftwood

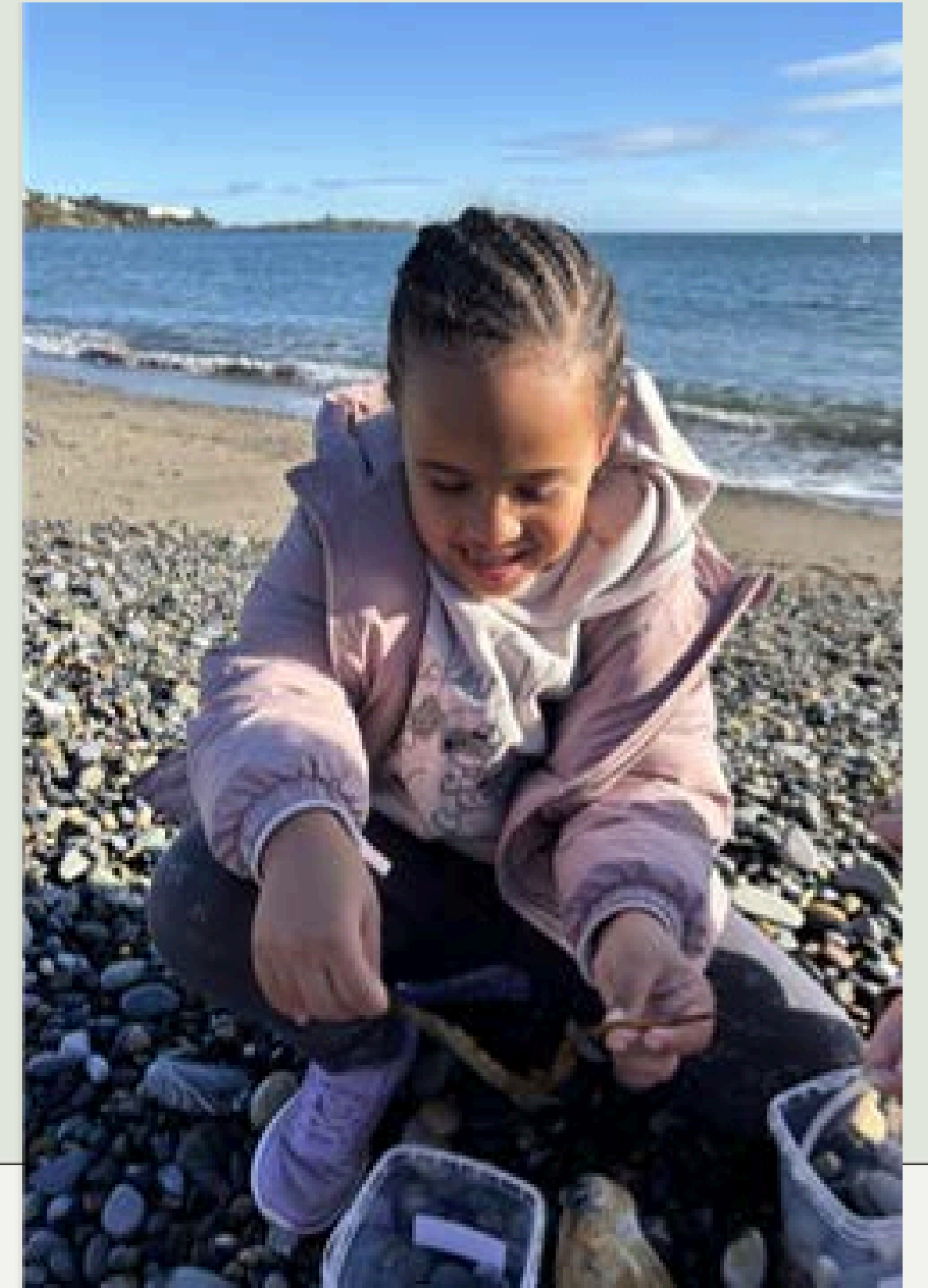


Shells





**KILLNEY BEACH, DUBLIN**  
**THAT'S WHERE YOU WILL FIND THE POSH PEBBLES!**







# BACK IN THE CLASSROOM



## LEARNING THROUGH PLAY / PEBBLE GAMES

We played Waves & Wonders Bingo, a fun and interactive game that helped us to recognise sea life, shapes and colours while developing our observation skills. We used real pebbles as our counters, giving the children another opportunity to handle and explore the natural materials. The children supported and encouraged one another as they searched for each image, making it a wonderful teamwork activity.



Pick a Pebble invited the children to closely observe and explore a selection of natural pebbles.

They looked carefully at the texture, shape, patterns and colours, discovering that each pebble is completely unique.

This sensory experience encouraged the children to slow down share their observations with one another, learning from their friends and working together in a supportive and collaborative way.



Looking at pebbles at the different shapes, sizes, textures, patterns and colours



## **TRACE AND DESIGN**

### **THE INSTRUCTIONS:**

**INSIDE YOUR BASKET, FIND ENVELOPE #2**

**IN THAT ENVELOPE YOU'LL FIND 3-4 PEBBLES EACH AND A SHEET OF PAPER.**

**PLACE THE PEBBLES ON THE PAGE AND GO AROUND THE SHAPE OF THE PEBBLE WITH A PENCIL.**

**WHEN YOU HAVE THE OUTLINE FINISHED DESIGN YOUR OWN SPECIAL PEBBLES.**

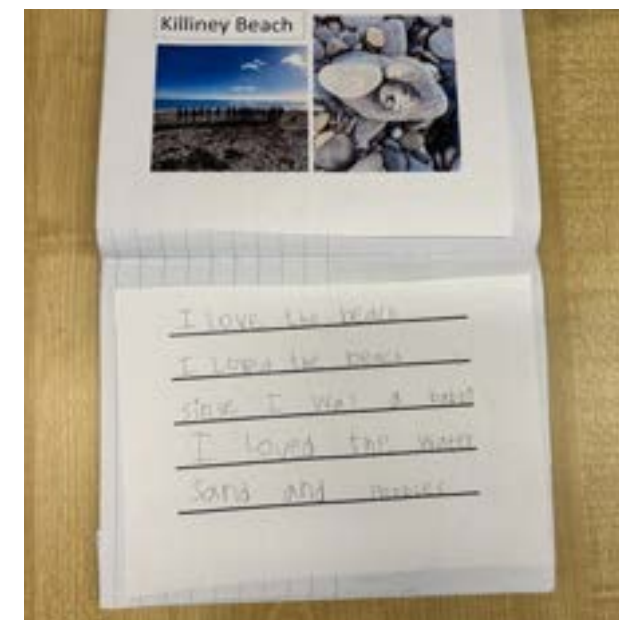
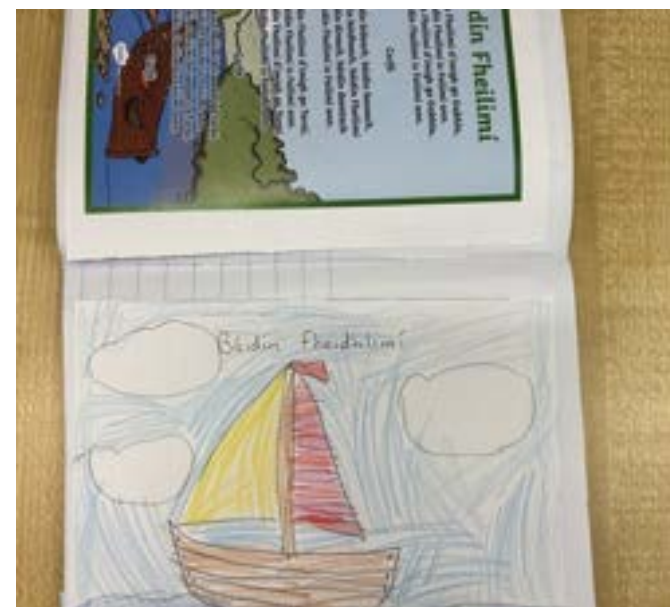


**THIS ACTIVITY DEMONSTRATES, DECISION MAKING, SPACIAL AWARENESS, CREATIVITY & DESIGNIT ALSO ALLOWS YOU TO FOCUS ON THE PRESENT MOMENT, IT IS A VERY CALM AND MINDFUL ACTIVITY TO DO.**

# THE PROJECT JOURNAL

## DOCUMENTING OUR JOURNEY -

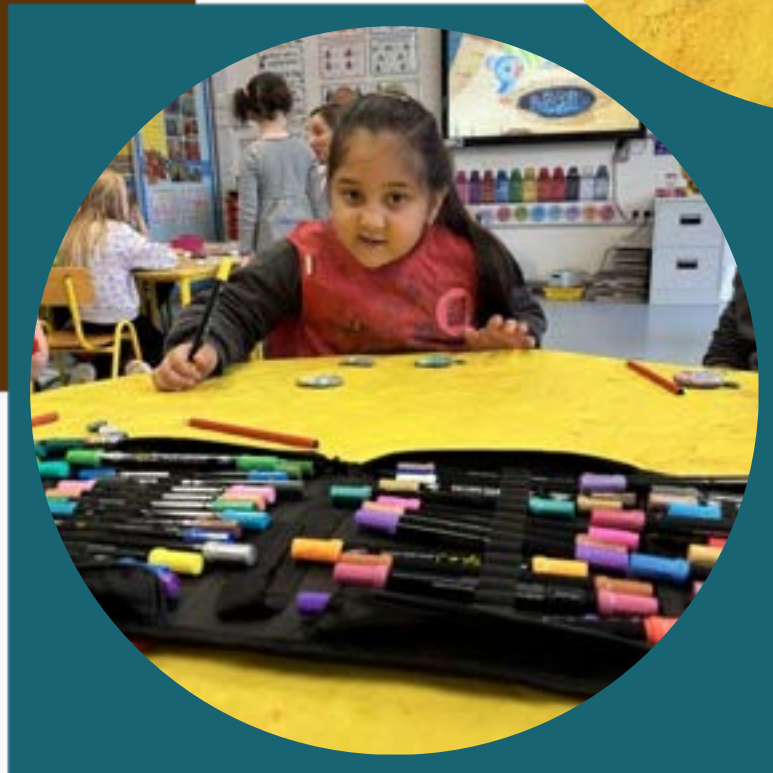
Throughout the project, the children recorded their experiences in a special Waves & Wonders journal. This became a space for drawing, mark-making, early ideas and reflections, allowing the children to look back on how their creativity and confidence grew from week to week. The journal captured the process behind the artwork, the exploring, imagining, experimenting and learning, making their creative journey visible and meaningful.



## FROM NATURE TO CLASSROOM

After our trip to Killiney Beach, we returned to the classroom inspired by the sea and ready to begin painting our pebbles. This was the moment when our ideas started to come to life through colour and creativity.

The beach experience allowed the children to bring real memories, textures and colours into their artwork.





## CREATING OUR INDIVIDUAL ARTWORK

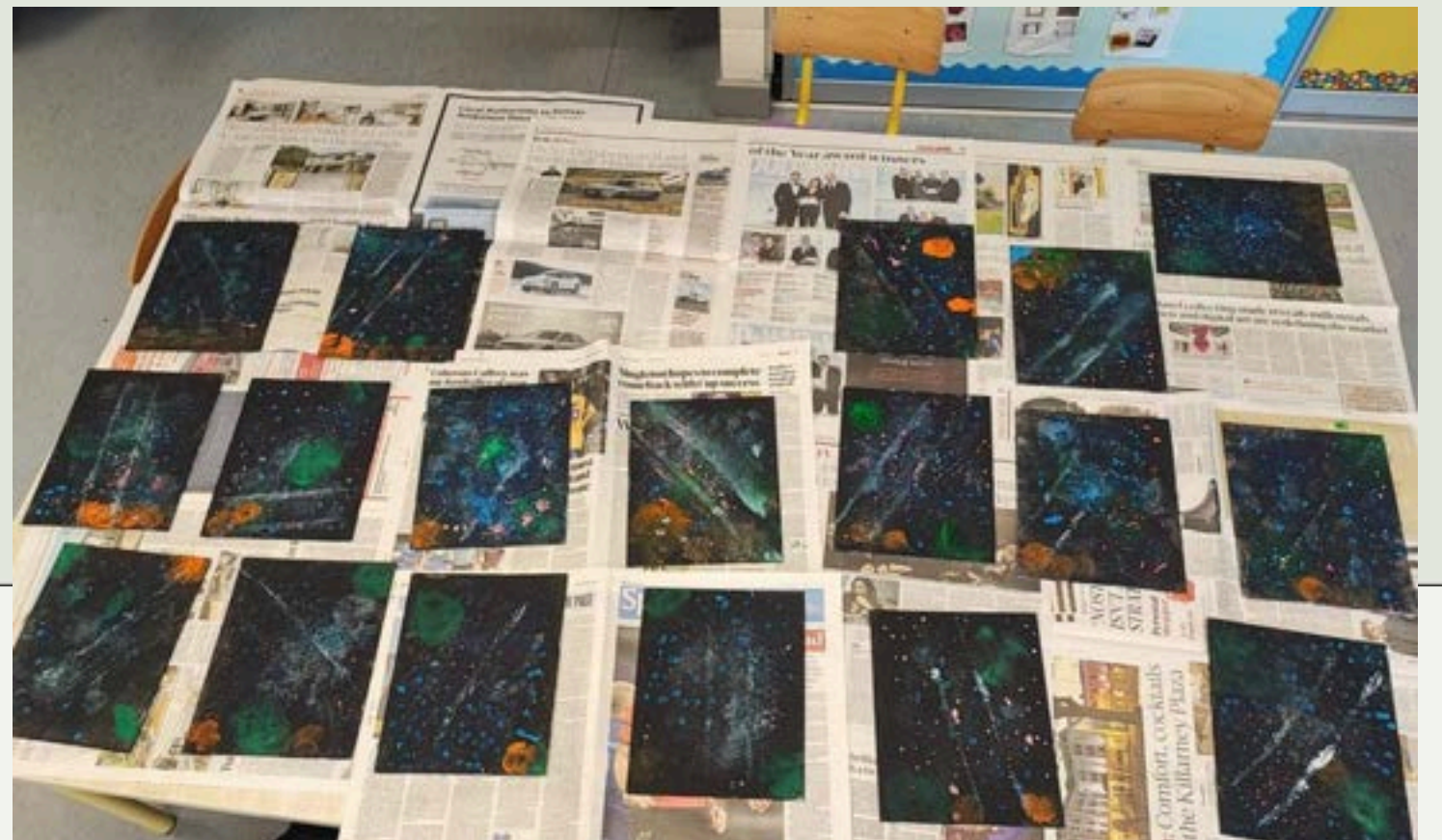
Each child created their own unique piece of pebble art inspired by our Waves & Wonders theme. They carefully selected their pebbles, thought about their design and chose colours, shapes and layouts that reflected their own ideas and imagination. This process encouraged independence, decision making and creative confidence, as every artwork was different and special.



THIS WAS A MOMENT OF GREAT JOY AS THE CHILDREN SAW THEIR IDEAS COME TO LIFE.



IT WAS MESSY BUT WAS SO MUCH FUN, LOOK AT THEIR FACES



## OUR COLLABORATIVE MURAL

Our final collaborative mural was inspired by under the sea. We also incorporated the traditional Irish song *Báidín Fheilimí*. The music connected beautifully with our Waves & Wonders theme and brought a sense of movement, rhythm and storytelling to the piece. Rebecca painted the base of the mural, creating the ocean setting for our artwork. Each child then added their own painted pebbles and individual creations, building a shared underwater scene together. This process allowed every child's work to become part of one large, meaningful artwork, a celebration of teamwork, creativity and pure imagination.





### STOP #3: (MATHS IN DISGUISE!)

The Instructions:

Find Envelope #3: Inside are 10 fresh pebbles and your cardboard "game board."

Pick Your Teammate: Partner with your neighbor.

The 5-Minute Maker Challenge:

Partner A: Paint 5 Bees (Yellow with Black stripes).

Partner B: Paint 5 Ladybirds (Red with Black dots).

The Arena: Use your marker to draw a 3x3 grid on the cardboard.

The Duel: Play a game of X's & O's!



#### THE "DISGUISED" LEARNING POINTS:

SPATIAL AWARENESS:

MAPPING OUT A 3X3 GRID ON A BLANK PIECE OF CARDBOARD.

PATTERN RECOGNITION:

IDENTIFYING "3-IN-A-ROW" SEQUENCES.

LOGIC & STRATEGY:

PREDICTING YOUR PARTNER'S NEXT MOVE (PROBLEM SOLVING).

SORTING & CLASSIFYING:

5 BEES VS. 5 LADYBIRDS (SET THEORY).



**[PLAY VIDEO NOW]**

# THANKS FOR LISTENING

## Q & A



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