



Celebrating Women In STEM with Jackie McConville, Maths Teacher at Morrison's Academy

Jackie joined the Mathematics department at Morrison's Academy in 2012.

She graduated from Edinburgh University with a BEng (Hons) in Electrical and Electronic Engineering and did her PGDE at Strathclyde after a spell working in the banking sector. Jackie is a strong advocate of connecting the real world applications of Mathematics to the skills the pupils learn in class.

Outside of the classroom, she enjoys spending time with her family in the great outdoors.

1. What's your favourite memory of STEM at School?

My favourite memory is joining a science club at school and exploring different aspects of science. Two of the experiments I remember well were making circuits to power a light bulb and a buzzer, and looking at the liquid and solid properties of Oobleck (a non-newtonian fluid). This prepared me well for the lab task in my degree where we made a circuit board to turn the oscilloscope into a TV screen.

2. What did you study to become a maths teacher?

I didn't know what to study when I left school, however I knew I liked maths and physics. I tried to look into things that combined the two and decided that Engineering would be a good option. I studied Electrical and Electronic Engineering at Edinburgh University. This allowed me to delve deeper into the applications of maths, especially into calculus which I love. I also quickly discovered that I liked working with people rather than mainly lab focussed work. I decided to combine my love for maths and people and did a PGDE in Maths. If physics had not been full I would have liked to consider a dual registration in both subjects to combine my passions.

3. What is the best thing about your job?

The pupils and trying to make something difficult seem easier. I get to do what I love and work with great people every day. The feeling of having helped someone is what makes all the difference.

4. What's your advice for girls who aspire to follow a career in STEM?

There are so many pathways to follow in this ever changing industry. It is both fascinating and stimulating and you can find something that is really tailored to you. Whether you like the mechanics of how things work, whether you want to contribute to medicine and technology or

explore the world of renewable energy. The options are just amazing and because of the thinking skills you develop, the doors to other careers are also opened.

5 . Who was your inspiration growing up?

It's a bit cliché, but my parents. My dad's engineering background took him into nuclear, railway, telecommunication and space. His skills were not specific to those industries but gave him the flexibility to adapt. My mum worked in data management and then became a maths teacher. She always had a way of making something difficult seem easier and I benefited from understanding the value of this skill.