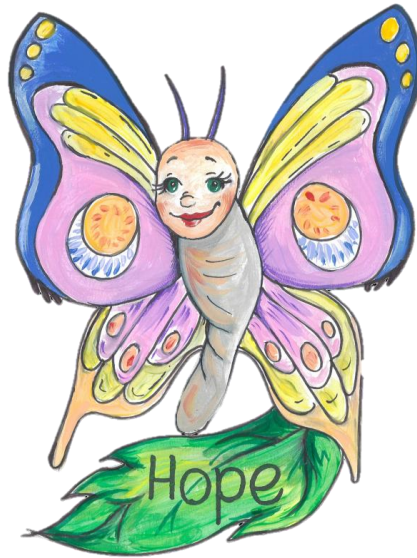




Nadine's Story: Holding on to Hope

Children at Priory School are very special indeed! They have the most amazing power to plant seeds and make flowers grow with every positive choice that they make. They demonstrate how kind, determined and courageous they are every day. And, for this reason, their school now resembles the most beautiful garden you have ever seen!

The garden contains an outstanding orchard filled with the ripest apples, plums, pears, cherries and berries. They thrive in the best conditions for each of them. There is also a wonderful woodland with trees that have strong roots and grow as tall as skyscrapers.

Bernie the dog takes care of the children inside of the school. And flying above the garden is Myra the owl who is eager to join the children in their learning and play.

But, what you might not have realised, is that there are other creatures living in the garden too. Animals that are born from the Priory Values and demonstrate them every day. Animals like Nadine the butterfly and this is her story...

Now, I want to let you in on a little secret. You see, when Nadine first appeared in the Priory garden, she wasn't a butterfly at all. She started life as an egg! And when she first hatched, she was – in fact – a caterpillar! She spent her time crawling along the branches of some of the trees and munching and crunching the leaves she could find. When she was old enough, Nadine changed again! This time she enclosed herself in a delicate cocoon and she waited and waited until it was time to emerge. After some time, Nadine burst free from her cocoon and became the beautiful butterfly that we see her as today.

That meant that Nadine had changed her appearance four times in her life! But one thing that never changed was the hope that she carried in her heart. As a caterpillar, she hoped that her brother (who was very hungry indeed!) left some of the food for her to eat and she hoped that she would be safe from the watchful eyes of the birds up above. In fact, Nadine the caterpillar hoped

that, one day, she would have wings so that she could fly with the birds in the sky. In her cocoon, Nadine hoped that her wings would be strong enough to carry her to the clouds and she hoped they would be purple because that was her favourite colour.

Nadine's positive way of looking at the world around her meant that she was a very wonderful friend to have. If Kaspian, Dara and Imara, had a worry, it was Nadine that helped them work it through. Having hope did not mean that Nadine was happy all of the time. But, it did mean that she always tried to look at the positive in things. She saw challenges and mistakes as opportunities and tried to begin every day with a fresh start.

When the sun was shining and Nadine was flitting and fluttering among the flowers, it was easy to stay positive and have hope. But our story takes place on a day quite unlike this...our story takes place on the night of a storm!

One Friday evening, after the children had gone home for the weekend, Nadine noticed an increase in the wind speed. The wind whipped and whooshed and the little butterfly was blown on a breeze to a part of the garden that she had never seen before.

"I might be lost but it's ok. Exploring new places is always fun. I wonder what I'll discover in this one!" She told herself. She looked around the garden at the unfamiliar sights and tried to map out a journey home. As she flew, Nadine noticed that the sky had greyed and darkness began to conquer light.

"It might be dark but it's ok. Night comes after every day and that's when the nocturnal creatures come out to play." Nadine told herself as she continued home. As she glided through the garden, she noticed drops of rain starting to fall.

"It might be wet but it's ok. Rain helps the flowers grow. I'll take it easy. I'll take it slow" Nadine dodged the droplets until her home came into view. She felt the temperature drop and she started to shiver.

"It might be cold but it's ok. My knitted blanket will keep me warm. I'll snuggle down safe from the storm." Finally home, Nadine closed her eyes and fell to sleep. She dreamed of adventure, night time animals and flowers but, when she woke, the reality was very different.

The storm raged all weekend. The wind whipped at the trees and flowers. The icy temperatures caused a frost on the ground and the animals stayed home shivering. The rain hammered on the grass and a muddy carpet was formed. And finally...with one colossal THUD, a humungous tree came crashing down. The garden was a complete mess and the storm seemed never-ending.

The creatures of the garden who were cold and wet and scared called a meeting with Nadine. Nadine was like a bottle of sunshine. They knew that she would help them to see the positive. Surely, there must be a positive. But Nadine didn't know what to say or do. As she looked at the destruction in the garden and the faces of her frightened friends, her heart fell. "I...Erm...It...Well..." Nadine didn't have the words. It felt like hope was lost and Nadine had never lost hope before. "I need a minute," Nadine told the animals.

At a loss, Nadine did what she loved the most. She flew. She had no idea where she was flying to but she knew, that in times of trouble, you should try to do what makes you happy. So even though the sky was grey and the wind was pushing her back and the cold was making her shiver and the rain was falling so heavily, she flew. She dodged the debris, the lightning and the rain. She flew higher and higher. Higher than she had ever flown before. Higher than the fog and the grey and the clouds and do you know what she saw?

Blue skies! Nadine gasped. Even though the storm raged below, the blue sky and sun were always there. Hiding... but there. Just waiting for the storm to pass. And Nadine realised that this is what she and the other animals needed to remember too. That the storm and the bad days won't last forever. That, someday soon, the sky will be blue again. She flew back down to tell the other animals about what she had discovered. She stood in front of them and said:

*Sometimes life can seem quite tough,
The work is hard; the weather's rough,
But I know that we all can cope,
When we just hold on to hope.*

And the creatures waited...and huddled together....and hoped. And the storm did indeed pass! When the children returned to school on Monday, the sun was shining and they were shocked to discover the fallen tree.

Nadine reminds us that, even though life won't always be easy, the blue skies will always return and holding on to hope can help us to manage the bad days a little better.