

Case study: Catering for allergies, Bulphan Church of England Primary School, Essex

We nearly lost our 5 year old daughter Daisy to anaphylactic shock in May last year. It was the most harrowing and traumatic experience to have to go through. It was to an unknown allergy to nuts; the anaphylaxis was the very first sign of any problem. If it was not for the prompt attention of our pharmacist, paramedics and local hospital we would be facing 2014 without our child and broken hearted.

After something so terrifying happening it's all too easy to wrap your child in cotton wool and insulate their entire existence in a desperate attempt to keep them safe. If I could at the time, I would never have let her out of my sight again for a single second, nor let her eat a morsel of food that had not been prepared by my own hands. It's very hard to put your trust in anyone or anything when your child's life depends on it. But I recognised that I had to force myself to allow her to do the things she loves whilst doing everything humanly possible to keep her safe and make sure everyone who will come into contact with her knows how serious Daisy's allergy really is.

Daisy loves her school dinners and didn't want to have packed lunches, so Karen, the cook at our children's school, trawled through every possible ingredient that she uses to ensure our child's safety. She spent many hours of her own time researching things and altering anything that was needed. In the process of doing this she noticed a number of discrepancies in the food lists for the local schools, which have now been rectified. Thanks to Karen's care, professionalism and dedication to her job, Daisy can still enjoy the school dinners she loves so much, whilst giving us, her parents, the confidence and peace of mind to allow her to carry on with her normal routine as much as possible.