

Examples of what you could say

Sometimes you may have very little information but you want to let the school know as much as you can. Here is an example of a brief announcement you could use in this situation.

The example is for secondary school, but the same principles apply for primary school, using language more appropriate for younger children.

I have some very sad news. Jenny Flynn from Year 10 died after an accident while crossing the road on her way to school this morning. At the moment, I have very little information as to exactly what happened but as soon as I have more details I will give them to you. Before this assembly, I gave the news to Jenny's close friends. They are understandably very upset.

As you can imagine, Jenny's family are in deep shock at this devastating news. They are very much in our thoughts.

The school will be holding a special assembly in memory of Jenny and to acknowledge what has happened. I will let you know the arrangements when I have them. If any of you have ideas for ways that you would like the school to remember Jenny, please let me know.

Some of you might be feeling a bit shocked at this news, others not sure how you feel and some of you feeling nothing at all. All these feelings are OK.

If you want to, there will be an opportunity to talk about Jenny's death in your form time. Don't forget there are people in school who will listen if you would like to talk. Sometimes a situation like this can bring back memories of other difficult things and you may appreciate a bit of time out with our school counsellor/welfare person.

Be aware that today might feel a bit difficult for some of you but also for some of the staff who taught Jenny. Look after each other and continue to be a good friend. Remember that everyone will deal with this news in their own way.

Some bereaved pupils may prefer a detailed message so that the same questions are not asked repeatedly.

Here is an example of how a sudden death could be announced in this way. This example is for a primary school assembly. The same principles would apply to a secondary school, but using more appropriate language for that age group.

I have some very sad news to tell you. Jim Jones in Year 5 died on Saturday morning. He was crossing the road with his Mum on the way to the local shop. He was knocked down by a car that was driving too fast.

An ambulance was called and Jim was taken to hospital. The doctors and nurses did all they could to try to save his life but his injuries were too severe and he died. His mum is not injured.

Jim was well known throughout the school for being a Manchester United fan and a very keen member of the football team. He was only 9 years old and much too young to die but sadly, accidents do sometimes happen.

Some of you may be feeling shocked at this news, some of you might be feeling rather frightened, some of you might be feeling nothing at all. All of these feelings are OK.

Our thoughts are with Jim's Mum, his Dad, and his little sister Mary who must wish with all their hearts that this terrible accident had never happened.

When you go to your classes after this assembly, you can spend some time thinking about what I have just told you. Your teachers will try to answer any questions that you might have. We can all help Jim's family a little bit by drawing a picture of our favourite memory of Jim or just writing a card that we can send to let them know that we are thinking about them.

The school will be holding a special assembly next week, when we can spend more time thinking about Jim, remembering him, and saying a special goodbye. When I have more details I will let you all know. If any of you have ideas for this, or would like to take part, let your class teacher know.