

School assembly

A whole school assembly, usually delivered by a Head teacher, can be used for the situation involving the death of a pupil or a member of staff.

The benefit is that the entire school receives the same news at the same time, keeping speculation and rumour at bay.

Follow the assembly with some classroom time for pupils to express any thoughts or feelings around the news that they have just been given.

End with something practical to do such as writing cards.

Suggested words for school assembly

Primary school

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. A car being driven too fast knocked him down.

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 tragically 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 nine years old and much too young to die but sadly very occasionally 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 probably be holding a special assembly next week for Jim when we can spend more time thinking about him, remembering him, and say 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, I would love to hear from you.

Secondary school

The same principles apply but using language more appropriate for young people.

See Schools Information Pack for more information on Assemblies.