

Girl aged five killed by sliding electric gate at residents' car park

Second such tragedy in a week; police in south Wales investigate

Police are investigating how a girl aged five was trapped and killed by the automatic sliding gate of a residents' car park in Bridgend, south Wales.

Emergency services were called to Brook Court, a new block of flats and freed the girl, but she died later of her injuries after being taken to the Princess of Wales hospital in Bridgend.

The girl lived nearby and has yet to be named. She is the second child to die in a week as a result of incidents with electric-powered gates.

Semelia Campbell, aged six, was playing with a friend near her home on Carnival Place, Moss Side in Manchester, when a motorised gate closed on her last Monday. She was eventually freed when police broke off an electronic control box but died from her injuries a short time later at Manchester Royal infirmary.

South Wales police said that a full investigation was under way into Saturday's incident with a waist-high black metal gate at the entrance to a small car park for a three-storey apartment building.

Eleanor Jones, who lives opposite the car park, said it had all happened in between her leaving home for an hour and returning: "I can't believe it, because the little girl was there when I went out.

"By the time I came home, it was just police in the street. It's devastating. You can't believe that a gate would do that."

One report quoted another neighbour: "I was in my garden and could hear someone shouting, 'Somebody call an ambulance.'

"I came out and there was this little girl on the floor dressed all in pink, trapped in the gate. Someone came running up and we were trying to find the poor girl's mother. They're a lovely family."

The gate was operated by a keypad. By yesterday evening it had been de-activated and left open.

The girl is believed to have been playing on her own. Police are examining the question of whether she might have operated the gate accidentally, or whether it was opened by a resident to move their vehicle.

Floral tributes, teddies and cards were left on the railings outside the block.

One read: "Tears are in my eyes when I think about a beautiful little girl lost."

Another said: "Pedal your little bike as fast as you can to heaven. Sleep tight little angel."

Local councillor Peter Foley said: "It's a great tragedy. I don't blame the kids for playing here. They should be safe here."