

PAPERBOY WHO WAS KNOCKED DOWN BY A CAR HAS DIED.

Witnesses said Declan Hubert, 14, had been listening to his iPod when he was hit crossing Hangleton Road, Hove.

The teenager, who was thrown into the air in the collision, suffered massive head injuries from which doctors said he would never recover.

Yesterday his parents, Caroline and Jeremy Hubert, who made the heartbreaking decision to switch his ventilator off on Sunday evening, said more than 50 people had gathered at Hurstwood Park Neurological Centre in Haywards Heath as surgeons fought to save Declan's life.

Mr Hubert, who paid tribute to his "playmate", said he wanted to warn other youngsters about the dangers of crossing the road while listening to music.

He said: "He was a very gifted guitar player who loved music. He was kind and gentle to the people he met. He had a great moral code and I will miss my playmate very much.

"He was almost as big as me so we would have great wrestling matches, go canoeing together and play squash.

"If it is the case that he was listening to music we would obviously like to send out a message to children that this isn't safe. They must always make sure they cross the road safely."

Mr Hubert, who schooled Declan at the family home in Hangleton Manor Close, Hove said: "We have had thousands of messages of condolences from people around the world. We are truly grateful for all the support we have received, it has been overwhelming."

Yesterday a Facebook site was set up in his memory where friends left tributes saying: "Declan you will be missed but never forgotten."

Declan was delivering newspapers for nearby newsagents Safegate in Hangleton Way when the incident happened on Friday morning.

His boss, Mukesh Patel said he had warned him not to have his earphones in when he did his rounds.

He said: "I always tell the boys not to listen to these things, that they are dangerous."

Hangleton Road resident Jill Maggs, who witnessed the accident, said Declan had his earphones in and his hood up.

She said: "We are all distressed and are so, so sorry for his family.

In March 2009 17-year-old Aaron Paul was killed when he walked into the path of an oncoming motorbike while listening to his iPod.

Aaron was coming back from a friend's house when the accident happened on the A2037 near Upper Beeding.