



Girl savaged by Labrador as she plays

NICOLA STOW

A THREE-YEAR-OLD girl was today set to undergo plastic surgery after being attacked by a dog as she played in a neighbour's garden.

Lucy Warren-Hill was playing in the garden beside her grandparents's home when the brown Labrador pounced on her, biting her face several times.

The attack, which happened at East Craigie Farmhouse on the Dalmeny Estate, near South Queensferry, left the girl with several facial injuries.

Her grandmother, Jeanette White, today said part of the youngster's nose had been bitten off during the attack.

It is thought that the dog may have been attracted by a toy which Lucy was playing with before attacking the three-year-old.

Mrs White, 65, said Lucy had been playing with her neighbour Hester Davies' children prior to the attack. She only knew what had happened when Ms Davies rushed to the house carrying her screaming granddaughter.

She said: "I heard all this loud screaming. It was Lucy. Hester was with her and we brought Lucy indoors. That's when I noticed that her face was covered in blood and her nose and forehead were cut up. Part of her nose looked like it was just coming away from her face. The poor thing was just howling."

She added: "Hester called for an ambulance - she was also in a hell of a state. Fortunately, the ambulance arrived in about ten minutes and Lucy was taken to the Sick Kids Hospital. It is such a shame - she's only three and she's such a pretty young girl. We are all pretty shaken."

Lucy had come up from London with her mother, Annie Dawson, 39, to visit her grandparents for Easter. Lucy was this morning awaiting emergency plastic surgery at the Royal Hospital for Sick Children.

But Mrs White, who has lived on the Dalmeny Estate for 23 years with husband Alexander, 88, said she didn't want the dog put down because of the attack.

"He is usually such a friendly dog. It must have been a one-off attack." Mrs White added.

One farm worker, who did not wish to be named, said the girl was playing with a toy in the garden when the dog pounced on her.

He said: "I think maybe the dog went for the toy at first and because the girl was playing with it the dog has become agitated and gone for her. The poor girl was bitten on the side of her face, forehead and nose."

A police spokeswoman said the girl was taken to the Sick Kids Hospital following the attack, which happened just before 5pm last night.

Ms Davies declined to comment when contacted by the Evening News today.

Complaints about Labradors harming humans are rare despite concern about attacks by other breeds in recent years.

The Dangerous Dogs Act, brought in by the last Conservative Government, places special controls over

certain breeds, including pit bull terriers and Japanese tosas, which must be muzzled and on a lead when in a public place.

But it also makes it an offence to allow any dog to be dangerously out of control in a public place.

If a dog causes injury and the case is proven in court, the dog can be ordered to be destroyed and the owner can face two years in prison or an unlimited fine.

The court can also specify particular forms of restriction, such as muzzling or leashing, for all types of dog, as well as having the power to disqualify owners from having custody of a dog for any period of time felt appropriate.

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