



Dog ripped open my girl's face & police can do nothing

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by Nick Coligan, Liverpool Echo

A GIRL aged four was recovering today after her face was ripped open by a dog she was trying to stroke.

But police said they were powerless to act because the attack happened on private property and the dog was not officially classed as "dangerous".

Molly Malone needed plastic surgery on her cheek after being bitten by a tiny shih-tzu last Tuesday afternoon.

She is now back at home in Seacombe with parents Kelly and Terence who are seeking legal advice.

Molly, who is due to start at Somerville primary school in September, was bitten while out visiting with a family friend.

Mother-of-two Kelly said: "She went to stroke it. But it turned on her and grabbed her face.

"She managed to get away from it but it bit her left cheek and lip and she had to go for plastic surgery at Alder Hey.

"Our first call was to the police. An officer came to see Molly and was shocked by the damage to her face.

"But they have no powers to do anything because it happened on private property. If it was out in the street it might have been a different story.

"We are seeking legal advice because we want the dog put to sleep. It is obviously vicious.

"We have two dogs ourselves and we are animal lovers. But it has really damaged her face and my daughter is now permanently scarred, it only just missed her eye."

A Merseyside police spokesman said there were a number of different offences covered by dangerous dog legislation, but none applied in this case.

The dog could be seized by police if it was one of four officially "dangerous" breeds – American pit bull, Japanese tosa, fila Brasileiro or dogo Argentino.

For any other breed the attack must happen in public or be one of a number of incidents involving the same animal for action to be taken.

The police spokesman said this attack was not in a public place and was the first incident involving the shih-tzu.

Last year doctors at Alder Hey's A&E department said they were treating the equivalent of a child a



day for injuries caused by dog attacks, with one in five needing further treatment on more serious wounds.

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