



Attack Alsatian to be put down

An Alsatian that attacked a 14-year-old boy is to be put down tomorrow at its owners' request.

Teenager Dominic Sanders, of Elm Drive, Garsington, was left with deep wounds to his shoulder and side after being bitten by the pet in a park on Saturday afternoon.

Today, Amy and Victor Armstrong said they were extremely sorry for the incident involving their two-year-old dog George - but denied claims they let the animal maul Dominic.

Mrs Armstrong, 59, said the couple, of Oxford Road, Garsington, had regularly let George play with their six grandchildren.

She said her husband had seen the dog chase a group of children on Saturday - and had reprimanded George when he put him back on the lead. However, he had not realised anyone had been bitten until yesterday's Oxford Mail story about the incident was followed up by TV.

She said: "We didn't know anything until we saw it on the television and I said 'that has got to be you' - we are the only people in Garsington with a German Shepherd.

"I am so sorry for what that child's been through.

"I went up to say sorry twice, but the family weren't in, and reported it to the police.

"We are not evil people, we are approachable and sorry for what's happened.

"We are shocked at what he has done to the boy - we cannot apologise enough."

Dominic, a former pupil at John Mason School in Abingdon, had been lying in a park close to his home with his older brother, John, and some friends when the dog and his owner came through a gate.

Dominic claimed the dog was allowed to run freely before it jumped up at him.

Dominic's mother Hillary Young said: "I am quite happy to know that it is

going to be put down because it has bitten a child.

"I think any dog that is angry and shows its teeth and bites someone really viciously should be put down."

Mrs Armstrong said her husband, who is 62 and suffers from cancer, had taken the dog for one of its daily walks and let it off its lead between two gates about 100 yards apart.

She said: "The other gate was open and I think George just bolted and tried to get through. The children started running and my husband heard them screaming, but he did not see him bite the boy.

"What man would stand there and watch a dog maul a child? Their first instinct would be to get that dog off. When he called the dog back he hit him on the bum with a stick.

"What happened was definitely out of character.

"We are having him put down, which I am a little bit choked about, but it should be done because it's the law."

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By Thom Airs

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