

Pictured: Bloodied and bruised schoolgirl, 13, when she had 48 stitches to her face after being attacked by a German Shepherd

- **Meghan Reynolds was enjoying an evening with friends in Sunderland park**
- **But German Shepherd suddenly launched a vicious assault on her**
- **It grabbed schoolgirl and began biting her face**
- **She had to endure almost four hours of surgery**

By Anthony Bond

With a large scar and heavy bruising, schoolgirl Meghan Reynolds can be thankful that she is still alive. The 13-year-old was enjoying an evening in a Sunderland park when a German Shepherd savagely attacked her. With the youngster lying on the floor, the dog - which was being held by its owner on a long lead - began viciously biting her face.



Bruised: Meghan Reynolds, 13, needed 48 stitches after being savaged by a German Shepherd in Sunderland's Herrington Country Park

As the dog's owner forced his pet to let go, witnesses rushed to help the youngster. She was eventually taken to hospital after a member of the public flagged down a passing police car - because an ambulance had still not arrived 40 minutes after the emergency call was made. Meghan had to endure almost four hours of surgery following the attack in Herrington Country Park.

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The brutal injuries resulted in the brave teenager needed 48 stitches to her face .

She said: 'It's a bit of a blur. I was with my friends, and one of them stroked the dog. 'The next I knew, it had grabbed me and I was on the floor with the dog attacking my face.'

Passers-by rushed to the youngster's aid, pressing a hoodie against the wound to stem the bleeding.



Upsetting: The teenager had to endure almost four hours of surgery following the savage attack . She is pictured with her mother Carol

Police officers drove Meghan to Sunderland Royal Hospital where her frantic mum Carol Reynolds was waiting. The mum-of-five, from Grindon, said: 'I got a phone call at about 7pm, and I just went straight down to the hospital, but no one knew what was happening because the ambulance hadn't turned up. I was in a terrible state. It was horrendous.'



German Shepherd's are regularly used by police and the army to keep control

The attack happened on Friday evening after Meghan had been to a barbecue at a friend's house. The owners of the dog, which has since been put down, are devastated by what happened and no one can understand why the animal, which has happily lived with children, turned on Meghan.

The plucky teenager said: 'It is a good thing it happened to me or it could have been a little child.

'The owner was really lovely. She sat holding me until the police car came and took me to hospital, and has sent me gifts and a card.'

Doctors won't be able to tell the extent to which Meghan will be scarred until all the swelling on her face has gone down.

Full-time mum, Carol, 38, who also has three sons, Connor, 17, Jack, 14, Michael, 11, and daughter, Jessica, seven, said: 'Meghan has been so amazing throughout it all. She hasn't cried once.

'You just never imagine anything like this happening.' Grandfather George Reynolds, 62, who lives in Washington, said: 'We want to highlight this as a warning to others about what can happen, and for owners to be extra careful.'

A spokeswoman for the North East Ambulance Service said: 'We are very sorry for the delay at what must have been a terrifying experience for Meghan and her family.

'At the time of the incident, we had a very high volume of 17 calls to emergencies where the life of the person was in danger.'