



## FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



**Request Number:** F-2015-00574

**Keyword:** Crime

**Subject:** Children Attacked By Dogs

### Request and Answer:

#### Question 1

Can you give me a breakdown of the number of children who have been attacked by dogs in the South Down area in the last three years?

#### Answer

This is to inform you that the Police Service of Northern Ireland has now completed its search for the information you requested. The decision has been taken to disclose the located information to you in full.

There have been a total of 16 attacks on children in the South Down area reported to the PSNI in the years 2012, 2013 and 2014.

There were 7 incidents of dogs attacking children reported in 2012, 4 incidents in 2013, and 5 incidents in 2014.

#### Question 2

Has this number increased or decreased since then?

Question two withdrawn by requestor.

#### Question 3

Can you give me a breakdown of the number of cases in individual areas - i.e. - Dromore and Rathfriland, Banbridge, Newry and Mourne?

#### Answer

As requested below is a breakdown of the number of incidents of dogs attacking children, broken down by their recorded area:

Year	Area	Number of Incidents
2012	Newry	4
2012	Banbridge	3

2013	Newry	3
2013	Banbridge	1
2014	Newry	5

**Question 4**

Do you know how many of these cases required medical attention/surgery?

**Answer**

Of the incidents listed above, medical attention was sought in 4 of the reported incidents, three in 2012, none in 2013, and one in 2014.

**Question 5**

Were the majority of attacks caused by family pets or stray dogs?

**Answer**

None of the reported incidents occurred as a result of children being attacked by their own family pet. The incidents reported all relate to dogs owned by a third party or the owners were unknown.

**Question 6**

Do you know if the dogs that attacked children have consequently been put to sleep?

**Answer**

This information is not held by the PSNI, it may be recorded by the local council area.

**Question 7**

What action was taken by police towards dog owners if their pets had attacked children?

**Answer**

All incidents of attacks by dogs etc. would be passed by the PSNI to the appropriate Council dog warden or animal welfare officer.

**Question 8**

And subsequently has anyone been arrested or prosecuted in individual cases of dog attacks?

**Answer**

As above, incidents of this type are primarily dealt with by Council dog wardens / animal welfare officers. As such, the PSNI would not hold this information.

**Question 9**

Does the PSNI offer support / guidance to families whose children have been attacked by dogs?

**Answer**

As above, incidents of this type are primarily dealt with by Council dog wardens / animal welfare officers and so any such support or guidance, if available, would be provided by the these departments.

If you have any queries regarding your request or the decision please do not hesitate to contact me on 028 9070 0164. When contacting the Freedom of Information Team, please quote the reference number listed at the beginning of this letter.

If you are dissatisfied in any way with the handling of your request, you have the right to request a review. You should do this as soon as possible or in any case within two months of the date of issue of this letter. In the event that you require a review to be undertaken, you can do so by writing to the

Head of Freedom of Information, PSNI Headquarters, 65 Knock Road, Belfast, BT5 6LE or by emailing [foi@psni.pnn.police.uk](mailto:foi@psni.pnn.police.uk).

If following an internal review, carried out by an independent decision maker, you were to remain dissatisfied in any way with the handling of the request you may make a complaint, under Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act, to the Information Commissioner's Office and ask that they investigate whether the PSNI has complied with the terms of the Freedom of Information Act. You can write to the Information Commissioner at Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, and Cheshire, SK9 5AF. In most circumstances the Information Commissioner will not investigate a complaint unless an internal review procedure has been carried out, however the Commissioner has the option to investigate the matter at his discretion.

Please be advised that PSNI replies under Freedom of Information may be released into the public domain via our website @ [www.psni.police.uk](http://www.psni.police.uk)

Personal details in respect of your request have, where applicable, been removed to protect confidentiality.