

Dogs on guard to protect city schools from theft

Schools have begun a practice of adopting dogs to keep their property and environment danger-free.



Mumbai: The famous quote 'a dog is a man's best friend' coined in 1789 by Prussia's King Frederick aptly fits with what schools in Mumbai are currently witnessing. The schools have begun a practice of adopting dogs to keep their property and environment danger-free.

Protection is the main concern that the institutions hold as dogs play an important role in keeping the institutions threat-free. Friendly with guards, the canines, mostly Labradors, act as watchdogs.

One such school that has pet dogs on the premises is Agripada's St Peter's School. The school has had dogs since its existence. Initially, the school had 3 dogs, who died one by one.

"A few months later we adopted two Indie breed stray dogs from Welfare of Stray Dogs," said Sister Renita, Principal, St Peter's School, Agripada. According to her, a robbery took place at the school within the first few months of 2001 when there were no dogs after the death of the first three dogs.

"This made us get one animal on board once again," she added. The principal further praised the dogs saying their existence is protective enough as unknown people are afraid of entering the school with the pets being on guard.

In most schools, the dogs are kept tied when students are around. They are left loose only after school hours so that they could roam through the compound, also protecting it.

Dombivli's St Theresa Convent High School is another school that has dogs on campus. Here, the dogs don't only safeguard the school premises but also the nuns who live on the campus.

“One of the two dogs is a Labrador, and the other is a mix-breed, and they both are left free in the school compound after the dispersal of students,” said Sunanda Nair, Science teacher, St Theresa Convent High School.

However, one such school where the students are allowed to play with the on-campus dogs is The Happy Home and School for the Blind, located in Worli. The stray dogs adopted by the school are not tied, they are always free to roam around.

“Our dogs are of great help to the students here because of their condition. Students walk, play, and also groom the pets,” said Meher Banaji, Director of the school. The educationist further added that the dogs play the role of best watchdogs and bark on not just unknown people roaming around the school but also other animals that pass by.

Dombivali’s Vidya Niketan School was on the list of schools with dogs until last year when the three on-campus Labradors lost their lives due to their age. “Having dogs on our premises was the best way to protect our premises and they were also good friends with our security guards. However, after we lost them, we are yet to decide if we should adopt more dogs now,” said a senior officer, Vidya Niketan School.

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