



The dog on the football field

Football practice in the park had finished half an hour ago and most of the team had gone home. Paul, the coach, was packing the equipment away when a dog ran across the field towards him and started playing with one of the balls that he hadn't put away yet.

"Hello there," said Paul, looking around for the dog's owner. He saw a lady walking a dog on the other side of the field and assumed that she was the owner.

After packing everything away, he turned around and found that the dog was still there. It sat and looked at Paul. By now, the woman that Paul had seen across the field was quite close. The dog ran over to the woman and started to play with her dog.

"Is this your dog?" she called to Paul.

"No, I thought it was yours," he called back, as he ran over to join them.

The stray dog was friendly, and it allowed the woman to check for a collar.

"No collar on her," she said after quickly examining the female dog. "She looks healthy enough though."

"Shall we call the police?" asked Paul.

"I found a stray dog last year and called the police, but they said it's not their responsibility to collect stray dogs," said the woman.

"Then should we call the RSPCA?" suggested Paul.

"The RSPCA only rescues injured stray dogs. You need to call the local authority dog warden."

Fortunately, Paul had his mobile phone. He used it to find out the phone number for the dog warden, who said that he would be there in 20 minutes.

In a short while, a white van pulled into the park and stopped next to the football field. The dog warden saw that the stray dog was friendly. He took a microchip reader out of his van and passed it over the back of the dog's neck.

"Well, she has a microchip so we can now find out who the owner is," he said. "I'll have to take her to the kennels until I can get in touch with the owner."

"Can I look after her?" asked Paul.

"No, if you find a stray dog and you know who the owner is, but you decide to keep the dog without informing the owner, you are breaking the law. Besides, we have the facilities to care for the dog until we can return her to her owner."

With the dog put safely into a pet carrier and lifted into the van, the dog warden drove away.