



TRAINING & PROGRESS

Information

Whilst in our care, your beloved pooch will receive consistent training and progress monitoring. It is rare for a dog to learn all round positive and polite behaviour unless all parties who handle him / her are consistent with what they do. If your dog displays signs of problematic behaviour – please take a look at all those who handle him / her and ask yourself if your training has been consistent! We use reward based training – though aim to wean all dogs off edible rewards before the age of 1. Treats and a pack of dogs are rarely a good mix!

Every positive action is rewarded by praise, and for negative behaviour – we either change our tone of voice, ignore or separate – depending on the circumstance. The safety and well being of each and every dog in our care is an absolute priority – and if any situation arises which may cause harm to your dog, we will do everything in our power to dissolve it before any injury occurs.

We supervise your dog AT ALL TIMES – and outdoor / play sessions are recorded on our CCTV. Because of this, and how well we get to learn your dogs voices and behaviour, we are able to immediately distinguish between “play fighting” and the moment this may turn into an actual dog fight. If this happens, and we are able to stop the fight before it starts, each dog who has been involved will be separated from the pack until they have completely calmed down. This may be anything from 5 minutes to hometime.

If your dog does something which will cause harm to a playmate – or a human handler, please understand that we may need to use surprise tactics such as creating a distraction (shouting, stomping our feet, clapping, banging metal pans together – or by hosing / pouring a bucket of water over him/her), by placing a separating board in between, or throwing a blanket over your dog. In any case, your dog will be separated until he / she has calmed down.

If your dog is witnessed to be hostile / aggressive or causing negativity within the group on more than one occasion, we may have no choice but to permanently exclude him from group activity – or even our care altogether. We are fortunate enough to have separate areas if dogs do need to be kept apart from others for any reason – but if aggression presents a serious problem then regretfully you will need to make alternative care arrangements for your dog.

We use the bullet points in this document to carry out and monitor training and progress – and will write in your doggy diary each time we feel any clear positive or negative steps have been made.

Though we have a lifetime of experience working with animals – we do not pretend to know everything! Just as working in any other industry, working with animals is an ongoing educational process! Therefore if you feel we have missed something vital from our practices, please do let us know 😊

Achievement Certificates will be awarded for:

Paying Attention; On Lead Exercise; Socialisation; Tricks and Perfect Behaviour!



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Relaxing in Different Environments

Your dog will be encouraged to relax and be polite and content in the following environments:

- In the House (hallway, kitchen, living rooms, kitchen)
- In the Dog Cozy (both during play and rest)
- In the Gardens (both during play and relaxation time)
- In the Exercise Field
- During feed times
- When left alone (in an open room with us on the other side of the door, not completely!)
- With different noises
- On walks (on and off lead)

You can easily introduce calm into your dogs lifestyle by reducing or removing hyperactive stimulants! For example, if you have a dog which barks every time someone walks past the window – keep the curtains / blinds closed. If he / she can still sense movement outside the house, don't allow him / her into that room. If there are certain times when you know your dog will react, you can help distract them by putting on classical music – or even use a white noise machine!

If your dog is too boisterous with other dogs in public – this is likely because he / she was not socialised enough – or trained effectively when young. If this is the case, you may need to avoid such situations and find a compatible playmate at home or a friends house instead.

Rewards can be used for indirect (default) behaviour training too. Whenever your dog does something you like (for example, he sits down without being told to), give him / her a treat or ideally praise via giving a belly rub or toy. In this instance you aren't telling your dog to carry out the action – you are rewarding a behaviour that your dog does on his own.

Too much arousal without breaks, is asking for trouble. Even at Doggy Day Play all dogs must rest between sessions. The rest dampens down your dogs state of arousal, and teaches them to transition from excitement to calm.

Never reinforce behaviour you don't want! Ignoring is the only answer. If you come home to a crazy dog... keep walking past. If your dog jumps on you – don't look, don't talk, don't reach for him / her. Turn away and wait. When he stops jumping, reward him / her! If he runs around with your favourite shoe, don't chase! Try replacing the shoe with his / her favourite toy, a treat, a chunk of chicken... Say "drop it" as you make the exchange, which eventually will mean you can eliminate the need for an exchange.



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Paying Attention

Your dog will be taught and encouraged to pay attention to us at all times:

- When asked to sit down
- When asked to lay down
- When asked to come over to us
- When asked to hand the toy to us
- When asked to wait before eating
- When asked to wait before going through doorways
- When asked to wait before jumping in the car

We start with one to one training, then gradually build up to your dog being amongst the whole pack!

If your dog receives the “Paying Attention” award, it means that he / she has mastered all the above points – both as an individual and as a group!



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Reading Signals

Reading dogs voices and behaviour is one of the most important things we do whilst they are in our care, and we very quickly learn how to tell if your dog is:

- Trusting of his handlers
- Respectful of his friends and handlers
- Seeking attention / affection
- Happy in our environment
- Content in our environment
- Curious about something
- Being dominating
- Excited in our environment
- Anxious of something
- Scared of something
- Bored
- Unhappy
- Unwell
- Hostile towards a friend or handler
- Aggressive towards a friend or handler



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Socialisation

Socialisation is one of the most important aspects of a dog's learned behaviour. And one of the clear advantages of sending your dog to day care! We ensure that they are polite and comfortable when:

- They are alone (knowing that others are nearby)
- When they are eating (knowing that others are nearby)
- They are on a lead in public
- They are off the lead in public
- They are participating in group play
- They are participating in group rest
- Around different people
- Around different animals

If your dog receives the “Star Socialiser” award, it means that he / she has mastered all the above points!



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Handling

We provide consistent training on handling in all situations, and encourage you to do the same:

- Appropriate behaviour when on the lead (with us and with you)
- Appropriate behaviour when off the lead (with us and with you)
- Appropriate behaviour when indoors
- Appropriate behaviour when meeting your friends and family members
- Appropriate behaviour when meeting strangers
- Appropriate behaviour when visiting the vet
- Appropriate behaviour when visiting the groomer

Appropriate / polite behaviours include:

- Not pulling or dragging backwards when on the lead
- Not running towards every human or dog they see (or smell!)
- Greeting people with 4 paws on the ground
- Greeting dogs with 4 paws on the ground
- Going through doors patiently (either calmly at the side of you, or behind you)
- No anxiety or hostility towards new people and / or dogs
- Not jumping up at people or on worktops, window-ledges, fences and so on



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On Lead

Being able to walk your dog safely on the lead is of the most important aspects of owning / handling a dog. Pulling can cause serious injury – both to you and your dog. We will:

- Teach your dog to walk on lead without pulling or dragging when alone
- Teach your dog to walk on lead without pulling or dragging when with others
- Teach your dog to walk on lead without pulling or dragging when alone and when another dog comes towards you
- Teach your dog to walk on lead without pulling or dragging when with others when another dog comes towards you

If your dog receives the “Perfect Lead” award, it means that he / she has mastered all the above points – both as an individual and as a group!



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Tricks!

If your dog is healthy and physically able, we will teach him / her how to:

- Fetch
- Retrieve
- Give a paw
- Roll over
- Jump over small obstacles and through hoops
- Jump onto and run along platforms
- Weave through bending poles
- Run through tunnels
- Swim!

***If your dog receives the “Trickstar” award, it means that he / she has mastered
all the above tricks and activities!***



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Protectiveness

Whilst you may feel comforted knowing that your dog is very protective over you – it is not always a positive characteristic, especially in social environments. Your dog may become hostile and aggressive towards other dogs and people – and you may eventually find that you cannot take your dog anywhere with you! It is not an easy characteristic to undo, so from the start we will:

- Encourage your dog to not be protective over his / her owners and handlers – by ensuring regular interaction with different people and stimulants
- Encourage your dog to not be protective over his / her food and toys – by using a variety of methods including group toy play and eating with a friend nearby (on a lead)



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Problematic Behaviour

Puppies often present undesirable behaviour when maturing / teething. You can use many preventative methods, but ultimately, in most cases – your puppy will grow out of his habits as he / she matures. If any of these problems continue into (or start in) adulthood, you may find yourself needing to employ the services of a specialist trainer. We help to avoid problems occurring by preventing the following:

- Chewing (we do not allow dogs to chew our toys, furniture or material items!)
- Barking (we use distraction methods if a dog has an excessive barking issue)
- Jumping Up (we step back, bend down, hold our hand slightly above their head – or just simply say “NO”!)
- Ignoring (we do not very often encounter this problem – as all dogs love being with us and their friends! The most common issue with dogs ignoring you (post puppy period) is when they run off when you are in an open space. To resolve this, you have to keep their attention – from the second you unclip their lead. Every second call their name, squeak a ball, rustle a bag, show a treat – whatever it takes – keep your dog listening to YOU for every step he / she takes away from you. If they go halfway out of your eyesight – it’s way too far!)
- Urinating Indoors. Most common with unneutered males – and even more so if a non resident dog enters their territory! If you have a family / friends dog visit, let them play outdoors wherever possible. Don’t allow the “strange” dog on your furniture – and ideally, not on your carpets or rugs either. There are many products which are available to purchase, which claim to stop your dog marking / urinating indoors. Don’t waste your money! Just prepare a spray bottle filled with lemon juice and white vinegar – and spray it on any obvious marking areas. We watch dogs like a hawk when they are indoors – and if they attempt to squat / lift their leg... they are taken outside!
- Snatching / Grabbing / Biting. All these traits commonly evolve from giving too many treats – especially from your hand! Which is why it is advisable to reduce treat based training at as early an age as possible, and try to feed treats in dinner bowls rather than from your hand. If your dog thinks you are going to give him a treat every time you move – you must ignore him / her and cut out hand fed treats altogether! ALWAYS ask your dog to sit and wait patiently for 5 seconds before giving him / her a treat from your hand – from the very start of your relationship!
- Biting / Hostility. Often due to fear! Sometimes unfortunately a natural trait.
- Greed. As with treats, ask your dog to sit and wait patiently before feeding. Slow feeder bowls can make a significant difference too. Gulping down food too fast can cause digestive problems – so it is important to take any steps you can to avoid this.
- Anxiety. Just like people, dogs can grow up with an anxious disposition. This can be a devastating disorder – as you may find you cannot leave your dog alone at all; you may not be able to walk him / her; you may live to dread the fireworks season all year round. Unless your dog grows out of his anxiety (which can happen!), the best thing you can do is find a therapy which works for your dog. Be this medication, alternative remedies, a specialist product, a dark hidey cave, turning the TV up... For yours and your dogs peace of mind, you need to find a tactic which lessens his / her fear.

- Chasing cats and other animals. Many breeds natural instinct is to hunt. You can help extinguish this instinct by bringing your dog up with a cat / bunny / chicken in your household – but you will probably find that even though your opposing pets may become best buddies – it doesn't mean that your dog will not want to chase or kill anything else that moves! If your dog has a strong chase / killer instinct, the best you can do is keep him / her away from all animals. Remember it is a farmers right to shoot any dog who is seen to be worrying cattle or sheep!

We specialise in resolving anxious and problematic behaviour in dogs – and 99% of the time see success sooner or later! Unfortunately we cannot guarantee that we can help every case – and even if they improve with us, we also cannot guarantee that they will improve at home – as the two places are completely different environments! Please remember our primary service is day care – so it may be that your dog will respond better with a one to one trainer in your own environment.

If you have any concerns at all about your dogs behaviour – just ask us and we will do our best to advise you on the best course of action 😊