



## **Puppies**

Ensure that your puppy has as many positive experiences with people and other animals as possible, so that he is confident with them in the future. The younger you start this the better. It is also important to socialise your puppy with lots of different experiences, situations and objects so that they do not become scared of them. If puppies are not socialised with these experiences from an early age it can lead to serious fear and aggression problems later. If you want a happy, friendly dog that you can take anywhere with you then this early socialisation is vital.

## **Adult dogs**

It is still possible to socialise an older dog but it may take more time and effort. The dog may need to be retrained to relax in certain situations. If you would like advice about socialising an older dog please talk to Jennie, so I tailor the advice and training to the dog's individual needs.

## **A Good Start**

If you are buying your puppy from a breeder chose a breeder who has had the puppies living in the home environment. This means that the puppy will already have been socialised with the usual sounds and activities that happen in a home. Puppies that have been kept in kennels will need extra training when introduced to a home environment.

Puppies can be vaccinated from 6/8 weeks old with their final injections at 10 weeks. Ask the breeder if you can collect your puppy at 6/8 weeks so that you can begin the vaccinations and early socialisation or ask if you can have the puppy vaccinated early. Vaccinations protect your dog from potentially fatal canine diseases so make sure vaccinations are up to date before socializing your dog. Some vets run puppy socialisation parties for puppies who have had their first set of injections, ask your vet if they offer this. If your puppy has not been vaccinated carry him so that he can meet people, hear noises, traffic etc. Do not allow him on public ground where unvaccinated dogs may have been.



## **How to socialise your dog.**

Please ask for the socialisation list.

### **People**

Get your dog used to greeting people in a calm way. Never allow it to jump up for attention or nip people. Although this may be cute now, it isn't when they are fully grown. Even smaller breeds can alarm small children, the elderly or the not so dog-friendly. Only greet your dog when it has all four feet on the floor, and do so calmly so as not to over excite him/her. Ask other people to do the same. Teach your dog to greet people calmly, and gently.

Get your dog used to the fact that not everyone wants to say hello to him. While your puppy is young lots of people will encourage you dog to greet them, but people are not so tolerant of adult dogs, especially one that has bound over to say hello, uninvited! Take your dog to places where there will be a mixture of people including people who are not keen on dogs. Car boot sales are very good for this as everyone is busy looking for bargains! (However remember that they are often very busy so wait until your dog is confident with the big outside world, so as not to over-whelm it.)

Introduce your dog to children, so that you can teach your dog to behave calmly and gently. Ask a child to wait for your puppy to sit then to give your puppy a titbit.

### **Other Dogs**

Socialise your dog with vaccinated well behaved dogs. Remember that dogs are pack animals and learn aggression from other dogs so avoid dogs that are not well socialized. Supervise play and do not let it become over boisterous. Praise your dog when it plays gently and is well mannered. Sometimes older dogs will tell off a puppy that bites too hard or forgets its manners, don't worry about this as it is important feedback to help your puppy learn bite inhibition and good dog manners.

### **Traffic**

Stand or walk your dog (on lead) near the side of the road so that he can hear and see traffic. Teach him to sit quietly at the kerb so that he does not lunge at traffic or become scared of it. Reward your dog with a treat when it is sat quietly and calmly at the kerb.

## **Problems with socialisation**

Don't over expose your dog to too many new experiences as this may be overwhelming.

If your puppy is fearful of something remove him from the situation and talk to a trainer before continuing. The younger the dog the easier it is to deal with fear problems so seek advice as early as you can.