

## 1. Staff training Policy

**Provide and ensure the implementation of a written training policy for all staff.**

**Guidance · The training policy must be reviewed and updated on an annual basis and must include:**

- **Annual appraisal**
- **Planned continued professional development**
  - Quarter yearly seminars with professional Dog Behaviorist and First Aid Instructor covering topics such as :  
Canine cognition, Body language, Acceptable levels of play, Resource guarding, Current scientific literature, Dominance theory, Domestication of dogs, Canine First Aid and Characterization of breeds ETC.
- **Recognition of knowledge gaps**
  - During staff appraisals ask if there are any areas of concern. Document any cases of misconduct by staff or dogs and collate this information to inform where more education is needed.
- **Use of online courses and literature**
- **It will be applicable to any members of staff and can be shown by engagement with courses, written or online learning, keeping up to date with any research or developments for specific species and the documentation of the annual appraisal.**

**Suggest:** ask each member of the team to read one piece of scientific literature/ watch Youtube video/ read book etc, then present this back to employees during monthly staff meetings.

**Suggest:**

### **Profiling**

Create a comprehensive profile for every dog documenting all basic necessities (food, medical etc) but also record usual behavior. That is, usual behavior at daycare (this will quite often be very different to behavior at home reported by owners). Refer back to this often and record any instances of novel behaviours. This should be used as a reference to decide if the individual is behaving in a way that may be cause for medical concern or indicate psychological issues.

Note- dogs under 24 months will still be progressing through different developmental stages and behavioural responses here will vary more than older dogs.

## 2. Monitoring of Behaviour and Training of Dogs Programme

**Active and effective environmental enrichment must be provided to the animals in inside and any outside environments.**

- A programme must be available setting out enrichment, including, grooming, socialisation and play. All dogs must receive appropriate toys and / or feeding enrichment unless veterinary advice suggests otherwise.

### TOYS

- Possession  
Staff are responsible for evaluating possession over toys- any dogs that become possessive and show guarding behavior (growl, take toys far away from all other dogs, stand over toy with 'whale eye' etc) must be removed from any situation where toys are not under constant supervision. It is advisable such dogs only play with toys alone.
- Work for toy  
Some toys can be used for self-play and left in the area to be used as and when the dog pleases. Other toys can represent 'high value'. These toys should be kept on the staff until they want to actively engage with a dog or reward a good behavior. Toys such as tug of war ropes can be used to train or further engage a dog.
- High reward toys are more likely to aggressive behaviour with resource dominant dogs attempting to claim the object so these must be supervised constantly. It is advisable to only use these toys during active training, when only one or two dogs are present.
- Enrichment  
Small groups of dogs can be taught to scent for treats in the area. Hide small pieces of food and lead dogs to them with the command 'search' to engage their noses and the forebrain associated with scent detection. Ask a trainer for more details on how to do this.
- Dogs that are in appropriate health can be coaxed over small jumps, asked to stand and wait on elevated objects and taught recall. Give dogs small challenges, these build confidence and mobility. When engaging with the dogs staff should always have treat pouches on them to motivate good behavior and retain status as leader with resource possession.
- Grooming  
Appropriate brushes should be available for all fur types. Dogs should be checked over regularly for ticks, between the toes, nail length and dried if wet. Any scratches, lumps or bumps documented into the dogs file and reported to owners.

- **Consideration must be given to life stage, physical and mental health and breed when planning daily exercise.**
- Dogs categorized by staff into appropriate play groups. Older dogs that are physically less able should be given careful consideration with more time alone and escape routes from social play.
- Younger dogs give 'time-outs' when appropriate, with their play monitored and more actively directed. Dogs that seem less mentally fit showing signs of sporadic behavior or out of character displays should be monitored closely and documented, such cases may be deemed unfit for day care ultimately.
- Staff will be aware of breed specific needs through training provided and act accordingly. All behavior should be considered first in the context of the dog being an distinct species, and next on a breed level. Breeds needs should be given appropriate outlets.
- The outdoor space is set up with the natural dog in mind. Focused on spending time outdoors in field/ grassy area to evoke the natural dog instinct.
- **All staff must be able to identify abnormalities, and in particular dogs that are anxious or fearful about contact.**
- Normal behavior for each dog will be documented and any behavior outside of this realm warrants careful supervision from staff.
- Staff should be taught how best to interact with dogs that are more wary of humans/ dogs.
- If a dog appears to be acting abnormal, check the dog's files for consistency and make notes of behavior- talk to owners.
- Wary dogs should be approached specifically as trained in order to minimize their stress. KEY: less noise, less eye contact, more fluidity.
- **People must have the competence to handle dogs correctly. They must also have the ability to recognize and act upon undesirable behaviours.**
- Teach simple rules and boundaries via balanced training using positive

reinforcement through lessons with a qualified professional. Eg barking will be negated through a simple 'shh' command once food has been used to redirect attention.

- Unwanted jumping and possession over objects or people will be corrected appropriately and redirected. Tune into to signs of resource guarding and act at the earliest stages.
- Dogs are constantly given opportunity not restriction. Reinforce dogs for making the right choices-for example waiting by the gate instead of rushing through, coming when called etc. Do not force these behaviors but make them desirable via continued engagement.
- Empower the dogs to make the right choices, guide them through problem solving and remain at all times consistent. Training must always be done with patience and enthusiasm, never frustration or a bad attitude. Always set the dog up to win in these interactions- anxious dogs do not learn! The hormone response element that is active in a stressed dog quite literally prevents protein synthesis meaning dogs will be less likely to learn new patterns of behaviour and will instead default to autonimised flight or fight responses.

### **3. Documented procedures must be in place to accommodate the needs of dogs under one year of age.**

- Programme for the pups, e.g rest times, food times, play ideas etc

#### Food

- Ask owners for a full overview of the younger dogs feeding rituals and copy this exactly- a dog with routine is a happy dog. Minimise exposure to novel food items as younger dogs stomachs can more easily be upset.
- If possible ask owners to bring their own treats for you to use during enrichment.

#### Rest

- Routine for younger dogs is even more important. Make time for both rest and play when people and other dogs are present. The younger dog will benefit from learning how to be calm and relaxed both within and without the presence of other animals. Establish a clear routine for the younger dogs and ensure staff are all familiar with this so that it stays consistent.
- How much the young dog needs to sleep is dependent on age, breed and routine at home. Over stimulated puppies will show signs of unwanted behavior. Ask owners what is normal and document this. Likely puppies will need more sleep than they would at home due to the novel environment. Avoid over stimulating these younger dogs.

#### Appropriate play groups

- Only allow dogs that are good with puppies to interact- meaning, they know how to show avoidance and communicate conflict resolution. This avoids the need to add corrections in order to resolve conflict. It is important that young dogs have only positive interactions.
- Avoid over handling younger dogs and do not pick them up to remove them from situations. Do not permit staff to loom over younger dogs, instruct them to approach slowly and calmly with more side on body language to ensure dogs are not startled.

#### Play ideas

- Confidence building games- tug of war can be used to develop dog to human interaction, allows younger dogs to test and refine bite strength whilst jaw muscles are developing sensitivity. Positively enhances the animals prey drive via an appropriate outlet. Allows the dog to 'win', helping feed confidence into the younger dog.
- Ensure staff remain in ultimate control of the toy being used, eg retain the ability to use a release command and end the game.
- Teaching fetch. Can use the two ball method to refine this behavior in difficult cases.
- Teach search- hide food, toys or people and ask the dog to search to the object

### Structured socialisation

- All socialization should be monitored. Dogs should be matched in groups for size and age where appropriate. Staff should have awareness of 3 levels of play –acceptable, questionable and inappropriate
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- 1. Appropriate : balanced and reciprocated. Relaxed body language, fluidity in movement. Friendly gestures like play bow, turning and hip bumping are common here. 50-50 to 60-40 balance here.
- 2. Questionable: Body language is more rigid, some more intense vocalizations start to appear, dog may show more running away behaviour or default to humans if uncomfortable. Signs of anxiety include but are not limited to: tension, gaze avoidance, wide eyes, tense lip and ears. Remove offending items if dogs appear to be becoming overly possessive. Normally stalking behaviour should be disrupted, although often a part of the play sequence, this can easily turn into aggressive displays such as body slams.
- 3. Inappropriate: Biting and grabbing. Signs of over arousal. Humping (by either sex) is a sign of anxiety and much like a bark this is self-soothing, but not acceptable. Air snaps is a signal of intent. Standing with head over shoulder. Body slamming. Pinning other dogs to the ground. Group crowding- a collective pack behaviour to intimidate another dog.
- Do not allow dogs to 'sort things out', as a balanced and fair leader it is the staffs job to identify when play needs to be redirected or a dog is behaving inappropriately to the extent that they need to be removed. A good understanding of body language and canine communicative signals is required from all supervising staff.
- If unsure, a long line should be left on the dog until it is determined a safe and suitable candidate for off-leash play.

- Aim to provide a stimulating environment for the younger dogs in order for them to demonstrate their species-typical behaviour and exercise control or choice over their environment to enhance their well-being.
- Encourage: climbing on safe obstacles, stepping on unstable surfaces, adding toys that make strange noises or are animated, experiencing safe items falling/rolling, provide lots of safe chewing toys- many puppies will be teething or developing their jaw muscles at this time!
- Make sure all exposures are positive, if puppy has a negative experience with a particular stimulus (eg trodden on) – immediately replace it with multiple positive experiences with similar stimulus eg treats from that same person.

**4. A documented policy must be in place for monitoring the introduction of new dogs to the existing group to avoid stress to new or existing animals.**

- Introduce dogs when tired. Walk the new dog around the property whilst existing daycare dogs are stimulated with games and active playtime.
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- When staff are happy that dogs seem relatively drained of any energy, excitement or frustration, the next steps can be followed. If any dog appears still over-excitabile or out of the control of staff, this dog should not be involved in the meeting- all dogs should be able to respond to a basic recall and sit in their current state of mind.
- Introduce the new dog by walking very briskly with a loose body and leash up and down a long outdoor area. Bring 1-3 of the most balanced, relaxed and social dogs to join this horizontal walk, having a different member of staff walk them along a parallel line that will gradually move closer to the dog being introduced.
- It is important at this time no one allows the dog to sniff, mark or stop- this is an active and directed walk by the staff, the dog is a follower. Keep talking to the dog at a minimum and use body language to stay relaxed and calm but assertive.
- After a few minutes, allow the dogs to then sniff each others rear ends but try to avoid face to face meetings as eye contact here easily leads to conflict Never allow dogs to meet head on whilst on the lead- this facilitates aggression and reactivity due to intensified eye contact
- After 5 seconds of this give an easy 'come one then' and break contact.
- If this goes well, repeat with some more of the pack and then you can begin to slowly allow off-lead interactions.
- If any dog appears nervous do not rush to the final step, keep repeating controlled social interactions and wait for fluid body movements. It is important not to force socialisation - some dogs are natural less social and this needs to be understood and accommodated for.