

Aggression towards other dogs

There can be numerous reasons for aggression seen towards other animals. We will try to deal with these in order and provide advice upon each situation.

Fear induced aggression

Aggression towards other dogs is more often than not motivated by fear. An unpleasant experience where the dog has been injured or even frightened teaches them to avoid contact with dogs in the future and in order to display their displeasure at unwelcome advances of other dogs they show aggressive tendencies. The fear is sometimes made worse by the apprehension shown by the owners when they tighten the lead, signalling to the dog there is something to be concerned about.

These displays usually only occur when the offending dog is on the lead. With no option to escape they can only resort to this defensive strategy. Off the lead, they may very well keep a safe distance.

Fear induced aggression requires counter-conditioning by providing many other future positive introductions and associations towards other dogs that are safe, welcoming and passive with other dogs, whilst minimising future frightening experiences.

Status related aggression

Dogs will display aggressive tendencies if they feel their position maybe under threat or they themselves are being directly challenged. You can see this type of behaviour when a puppy is introduced to a household with an older dog and the puppy is tolerated for a while until their games become too rough and over bearing to the older dog. To put the puppy in it's place they maybe show dominant tendencies and 'tell the puppy off'. Persistent, pushy pups that do not learn when to stop or have not been reprimanded by another more confident dog, ca become aggressive as they get older, never having learnt social manners within the dog world and how to interact correctly, usually biting first rather than waiting to see what consequences may follow.