



Fosterers Guide

Firstly thank you, from the bottom of our hearts for volunteering to foster for us. We guarantee this will be one of the most rewarding things you will do. Fosterers are the back bone of the rescue, without them we are unable to assess dogs properly, you are offering them a stepping stone to their forever homes which is a really special thing to do.

To explain how things work we have put together this guide for you to help answer any questions, but if we haven't covered anything please do not hesitate to contact one of the team.

When you have completed all necessary paperwork and passed your homecheck you will be added to our facebook fostering group. We frequently post dogs that need a foster home in there, if you feel that there is a dog that would suit your home please let one of the team know. We do our very best to match a dog to the right home, for example if you have children we would only ever place a dog with you that we know is child friendly, we never place a dog from the pound with children, as the dog is not assessed.

The dog will be transported to you, this is done by a group of volunteers but if you feel you can help with any part of the journey this would be very much appreciated. You will be kept informed as to when the journey is taking place and we will liase with you about an estimated arrival time. It will more than likely be a volunteer transporter that brings the dog to you. They will have paperwork, and maybe food, bedding etc to hand over to you so please don't forget to ask if the dog came with anything.

Please let BABS know when the dog has arrived safely, you can do this

via the facebook fostering page or PMing the facebook page or by contacting one of the team.

Settling in

Please remember that a new dog will take a while to settle in. You may have a few accidents to deal with while he/she gets used to their new surroundings and your routine but we would expect this. We find rewarding good behaviour with praise and a treat is the best way to toilet train. If the dog has come with any food (throw it away if it's Bakers) please either stick to the same one or swap to a new food gradually. This is so you don't upset the dogs tummy and make him/her poorly.

We would encourage you not to let the dog up on the settee and not to let them sleep on your bed with you. This is because the new forever home might not want them to do this and the dog will become confused. We urge you not to attempt to change the dogs name for the same reason.

Introduction to resident pets/children.

Introductions to children and other pets should be done gradually. Please remember that the dog will already be stressed from being taken from it's previous home/pound and the journey, so encourage children to be calm around him/her initially (however we realise they will be super excited to have a new dog).

Be prepared to separate the dog from resident pets if there are problems initially, you may need to work on it but in most cases the dog will accept other pets.

To help you with introductions to resident dogs we have put together some advice:

Introductions to resident dogs

Before Taking Your New Dog Into Your Home:

- 1. Take your new dog for a walk at the park or around the**

block. Bonding with your new pet is important before he meets other pets at your home.

2. **After the walk with your new dog, introduce your dogs on neutral territory (at the park or on a walk through your neighborhood).** This introduction should be performed in a relatively quiet area with minimal distractions. Make sure there are two humans present during the introduction. *Please note: If your dogs meet in your house or garden, your resident dog may be protective of her home and therefore aggressive.*
3. **After the introduction, take your newly adopted dog and his new brother/sister on a walk together.** The dogs should walk side-by-side, but with a bit of distance between them. The walk should be positive and praising, and you should use a calming voice. Don't force interaction between the dogs. Also know that sniffing of faeces and urine is important exchange of information and energy between the two dogs, so allow both dogs to sniff areas after the other is done urinating/defecating and has walked away.
4. **If the dogs seem calm while walking together, allow them to walk closer to one another.** Go slow and take your time, and make sure to pay attention to each dog's behaviour. Once the dogs appear to be calm and comfortable with one another, they can now begin to sniff one another's backsides in a controlled manner for short intervals of time.
5. **Once your dogs seem comfortable together and there are no signs of fearful or threatening behaviour, you're ready to bring your new dog into your home.** Allow your new dog to enter the home first to leave his scent. Then, confine your new dog and allow your owned dog to enter the home.

The First Few Weeks at Home:

1. **Confine your dogs in separate areas of the home** whenever you're away, are unable to supervise their interaction, or during breaks between playtime.
2. **Keep playtimes and interactions brief.** This will help avoid

overstimulation and over-arousal, which can lead to fighting. Separating the dogs through a barrier like a baby gate will help them get to know one another while still maintaining a bit of separation.

3. **Pick up all toys, chews and food bowls for the first few weeks.** Leaving these out can cause rivalry between the dogs. You can reintroduce these items after a few weeks once your dogs have started to develop a good relationship.
4. **Feed your dogs in separate areas.** Don't forget to pick up the bowls once dinner is over!
5. **Take regular walks with your dogs.** This will help them get to know one another better!

Please be patient! Bringing a new dog into your home is an adjustment for everyone, and it can take time for the dogs to build a comfortable, healthy relationship.

Please contact the team for advice if you feel problems are not resolving.

Whilst you are out and about

All BABS foster dogs must wear their BABS ID tag while out of the home, if a dog arrives without one please contact us and we will post one out to you. Please do not let a BABS foster dog off lead, our insurance does not cover incidents if the dog is off lead when it happens.

If the foster dog is lost or is stolen please inform BABS IMMEDIATELY!!

Taking a foster dog to the vets

It is the responsibility of BABS to ensure that all dogs are chipped, vaccinated and neutered before they go to their forever home so you may be asked to take the dog to the vets to have this done. BABS will set up an account with the designated vet to pay for this, you will not have to pay vet bills for a foster dog. If you go on to adopt the dog then all vet bills will become your responsibility. Whilst we appreciate you may have a trusted vet who we will most likely use, we may have to use practices where we can get procedures done at a reduced rate or a practice that accepts something like a neutering voucher. Our funds are

limited so we have to look to save money where we can.

Please inform BABS before you take a dog to the vets for any other reason or if they become ill.

Insurance

BABS insurance only covers the dogs while they are under the care of the fosterer and any other adult from the same address who we are aware of at the time of the homecheck. Our insurance does NOT cover activities such as dog walkers, doggy day care, other people holding the lead when out and about, and people under the age of 18 are NOT covered at all. Should there be an incident while the dog is in the care of someone other than the nominated people then BABS will NOT be liable for any consequences, and should there be costs involved it will be down to the fosterer to pay them.

We appreciate that you may wish to take the dog away for a break with you - we have no objection to this (and would rely on your common sense regarding long lines, no offlead at all unless in a very secure garden) but we MUST be told in advance as there may be situations you are not aware of ie a dog being moved from a certain area for safety, so the dog should not go near there in case of repercussions, or possibly the dog may have a high prey drive so a lovely break in a country cottage could become a nightmare - and from the insurance point of view allowing a dog known to be like that to stay near livestock would automatically invalidate our insurance.

Flea and worming treatments

BABS has a stock of flea and wormer so please let us know if you need some and we will post it out to you. We can advise on how often you should do this. Please provide the weight of the dog when requesting flea and worming treatments.

If you require anything else for the dog please let us know.

Advertising the dog

We rely on regular updates including photographs in our facebook foster group so that we can advertise the dog. The more updates you post the more likely it is that your foster dog will find a forever home quickly.

If you can no longer care for the dog

If you feel you need the foster dog to leave for whatever reason please let us know. Do not attempt to move the dog yourself. We will require a bit of time to find the dog somewhere to go, we cannot move dogs immediately because we are a foster based rescue and don't use kennels.

When the dog finds a forever home

This may be upsetting for you, especially if the dog has been with you for a while but we can fully support you through the process. The new family may want to visit the dog first, if they do please give them as much information about the dog as possible so to give them a true picture of the dog and whether they will fit into their home.

They may have a dog already that will need to come with them to ensure that the dogs get on together – follow the introductions procedure for these meetings i.e go for a walk together etc.

We look on our fosterers as our BABS representatives so please ensure you are able to supervise this meeting.

If the family have travelled a long way they can usually take the dog with them if they decide they want to adopt and if this is the case we will provide you with adoption paperwork that must be completed by the adopter before the dog leaves your care, but some families may want to come back for a second visit. We will instruct them on what paperwork needs completing and how they should pay the adoption fee. We don't expect fosterers to handle money for us.

When the dog does leave please ensure you handover any paperwork (ie chip and vaccination records) and anything that is comforting to the dog like bed, blanket or toys. It is also helpful to tell the adopters what you have been feeding them and what times of day, how often they are

walked etc.

How to contact us....

Please contact us anytime if you have any worries, concerns or questions. Someone is always usually available.

You can either contact us through our facebook page, foster group or email to boxersandbullysaviours@gmail.com or you can contact one of the BABS team on the following numbers:

Emma Drinkwater (Lawrence on facebook) – 07812 631896 (Warrington, Cheshire)

Tracie Boulton (Southend on Sea) – 07946 650245

Maria Thornbury (Bristol) – 07917 859421

Georgina Murray (West Wales) – 01559 372317