



## **HAMILTON DOGGY DAYCARE** **CANINE ENRICHMENT, SOCIALISATION & SENSORY PARK**

Hamilton Doggy Daycare is anything but an ordinary doggy daycare service. Here we have created a sensory dog park which is specifically designed for canine enrichment playdates and socialisation training. As well as having the benefit of a large, fully secured park with full-time supervision of our dogs where they can play and socialise with other dogs to their hearts content, the acreage is designed to stimulate the dogs' different senses, giving them a workout mentally as well as physically. The park offers varying surfaces such as grass, bark chip, sand, dirt, gravel, river stones, astro-turf, timber decking, trampolines, ball pits, paddle pools, bridges and ramps etc. to stimulate the sense of touch. It also contains various dog friendly plants and herbs to stimulate smell, touch, and taste.

In addition to environmental and physical stimulation with their friends in a pack setting, we have a games program targeted at giving our visiting dogs a strong mental workout. Dogs are free to do as they please while here but, I find, much like children, they shine with structure. As such, we start with a short but vigorous ball game (this works off a little of the initial pent-up excitement we often see upon the dogs' arrival at the park which, left unchecked, could result in anti-social outbursts). After that, we have a treasure hunt (with food treats scattered and hidden about a designated area of the park). Then it's time for free play, where the dogs can run about with one another, play on the equipment (including sandpits, ramps, doggy fort, seesaw, trampoline, slippery dips, adventure playground equipment, ball pit, paddle pools, agility logs, trampoline beds, etc.) and play with interactive toys (including various types and sizes of balls, frisbees, tugger-ropes, bubble machines, squeakers, flirt pole, water sprinklers, and more). During this time, our supervisors are also initiating immersive group games - for example, ball herding, which aids in building the confidence levels of some of our new members or initially more introverted friends.

The most important aspect of the dogs' time with us is their social interaction and enrichment. While there is much more to proper socialisation training than doggy daycare play sessions, we offer a space where dogs just get to be dogs with dogs in a secure and supervised environment. Proper socialisation in safe and healthy surrounds, ideally from puppyhood, is vital for the upbringing of a healthy, happy, confident dog. Socialisation training benefits not just a dog, but its guardian & every other human or animal who should encounter that dog throughout its life. Through proper socialisation, a dog finds its confidence and learns to behave appropriately in any given situation.

But we don't stop there! We also address basic obedience and behavioural modification training while the dogs are in our care. A clear understanding between the dogs and their supervisors on what behaviour is welcomed here and what is simply not tolerated (using gentle and positive reinforcement training methods) quickly establishes a respectful pattern of behaviour during our doggy daycare playdates. This not only makes for a fun, friendly and safe experience for our attending dogs, but generally also translates into small but consistent and noticeable behavioural improvements when they go home.

We charge \$35.00 per dog per session. The fee includes collection of your pup in our airconditioned dog bus (within a 10km radius of Hamilton), transport to our private dog park, supervised playtime (by never less than 2 staff members), food treats and bus return of your pup to your home (approximately 4 hours later). Your pup will either travel in a dog crate or secured on a doggy seatbelt (dependent upon the size of your dog and its comfort/preferences). We bring our own leads for collection/return, but your dog is expected to be wearing its collar or halter (preferably with nametag) when we arrive for pick up - this is a non-negotiable requirement in accordance with our 'Emergency Plan'. We lead busy lives and you are not required to be at home for collection or return of your dog - in fact, this is precisely why we offer our bus collection/return service.

Except in the case of emergencies, illness or sudden weather events, we require a minimum of 12 hours notice of all cancellations. This will allow us the time to offer the absent dog's vacant crate/seat to another dog from our ever-increasing doggy waiting list.

We run 2 group sessions per day 4 days per week, with each pack consisting of around 8 to 25 dogs:

- **MONDAYS** are reserved for individual dog training, dog rehabilitation training, and our new applicant meet-and-greet appointments/temperament screenings. *\*Please note that, for the health and safety of all of our attending dogs, NO new dogs will be accepted into Hamilton Doggy Daycare's pack play sessions without first having passed a temperament screening/assessment - it is also for this reason that we DO NOT take casual bookings (i.e. someone travelling through town and looking for a place to leave their dog temporarily).*
- **TUESDAYS** playdates are for the young'uns (from 10 weeks of age to adolescence).
- **WEDNESDAYS** playdates are for small and toy breeds of all ages. The morning sessions are comprised of the highly active small breeds, while the afternoon sessions are for the quieter kids, lap dogs and tiny tots (and is sometimes utilised as an introductory pack for very young puppies).
- **THURSDAYS** playdates are comprised of adult dogs of mixed sizes, with afternoon sessions consisting predominantly of the larger and higher energy.
- **FRIDAYS** playdates are comprised of a mixed selection of sizes, ages and breeds with similar temperaments. The afternoon session is a quieter session in which we will oft include our more senior guests.

*\* Please note, the aforementioned session/pack structures are offered as a general guide. More accurately, pack structures are decided upon on a dog-by-dog basis, taking into account each dog's temperament, social history, age, and general energy levels. Most of our sessions include dogs of varying breeds, sizes, ages, and temperaments so, if accepted as a member of Hamilton Doggy Daycare, your dog should fit in easily and make its own little group of besties.*

Importantly, this is not "Fight Club", and anti-social or aggressive behaviour will not be tolerated at the Doggy Daycare Park. Anti-social behaviour is, quite simply, harassment of other dogs. It can be demonstrated via overly rough play which may escalate, an aggressive bark or growl, dominance, bullying, nipping, snapping, biting, mouthing with pressure, mounting, pinning, nose punching, chest bumping, hunting, or jockeying with interruption to another dog's play. To reduce the risk of occurrences of anti-social behaviour in our canine enrichment sessions, we adhere strictly to our enrolment process, which includes an on-site meet-and-greet for you and your dog, a temperament screening and then gentle introduction process for every dog's first (trial) day. The temperament screening takes around 30 minutes, is done while we chat, and is simply time where I observe the way in which your dog interacts with my own dog, Benjen (German Shepherd), as they wander together around the park. All of our new pack members must pass the same screening. It is of the utmost importance to me that all of our attendees are free to play in a safe and happy environment where they can have fun and be themselves without being subjected to anti-social behaviour. While all dogs, much like people, may demonstrate anti-social outbursts from time-to-time (we all have our good and bad days), for the safety and wellbeing of all our pack members, anyone exhibiting such behaviour at their initial screening will not pass their screening and may not be invited to join Hamilton Doggy Daycare.

Once a dog has passed its screening, we schedule it for its first visit (or trial session). This is a normal Doggy Daycare play session but, at the outset, I keep the dog with me on a long lead while showing it around the park and introducing it to the day's attendees. During this visit, the new dog meets its peers and begins to form a bond with me as the pack leader. Once the new dog is feeling comfortable, it is set free to run amok unrestrained. This process aids in reducing initial anxiety and uncertainty for new dogs. While in our care, the dogs are also supervised at ALL times (the more dogs on site, the more supervisors we have on duty). We hope never to use it but, in case there is need for a doggy "time-out", we have also set up a secure 3m x 3m time-out pen aside the park. Anyone, even long-term members, who demonstrate anti-social outbursts during their visit, will be separated from the pack and placed in the Time-Out Pen until they cool down. They will be returned home if such behaviour continues and they risk suspension or expulsion if I feel they are unpredictable or if they are to commit multiple offences. You will always be advised if your dog has received a time-out and, I am always happy to discuss and assist should behavioural modification training be required.

For the health and safety of all our doggy charges, in order to be accepted into Hamilton Doggy Daycare and to continue attending our canine enrichment playdates, all dogs must be in good general health and be fully immunised (ideally C5 or equivalent). Proof of vaccination must be provided on enrolment of your dog into Hamilton Doggy Daycare.

For the health and safety of all our doggy charges, in order to be accepted into Doggy Daycare, all dogs over the age of 8 months MUST be desexed. Puppies are not required to be desexed but, in the case of adolescent pups coming of age, owners will be notified when hormonally driven behavioural changes are becoming evident - at which time dogs may be required to undergo a short period of suspension while awaiting desexing.

I hope this has given you a good sense of the canine enrichment service we offer and enough information to consider if you would like your best friend to attend our sessions. If you are interested in seeing some photos/videos of the playdates in action, feel free check out the Pets & Pads / Hamilton Doggy Daycare social media pages:

- Instagram page – [www.instagram.com/petsandpads.au](http://www.instagram.com/petsandpads.au)
- Facebook page – [www.facebook.com/petsandpads.au/](http://www.facebook.com/petsandpads.au/)

Now, should you still have questions or would like to sign your precious pooch up as a member of Hamilton Doggy Daycare, please do not hesitate to contact me. Our enrolment forms are also available for perusing on the "Downloads" page of our website [www.petsandpads.com.au](http://www.petsandpads.com.au).

Wags



Emma Faulkner  
Hamilton Doggy Daycare

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- *Doggy Daycare Agreement and Terms*