

Play area improvement survey – Grove Lane, Ripon

North Yorkshire Council is working to improve the quality of the Grove Lane play area in Ripon. This survey aimed to gather opinions from local residents and park users to help us decide on a new piece of equipment for the play area.

The money (£47,564.63) for this project would come from the S106 money (Commutated Sums) and Capital funding from the former Harrogate district. Commuted Sums is money paid to North Yorkshire Council by property developers when providing residential properties within the council area.

The online survey was open from Thursday 21 May 2026 until Thursday 2 July 2026, available on North Yorkshire Council's consultations web page. Posters were put up locally and paper copies were available at the local library.

Headline Results

- 38 respondents in total.
- The majority of respondents were aged between 31 and 40 and were female.
- The most popular activities were climbing, sliding and swinging, closely followed by spinning.
- The most requested equipment types were climbing frames or boulders, slides, and swings.
- Additional comments frequently mentioned zip lines, monkey bars, trampolines and larger climbing structures.

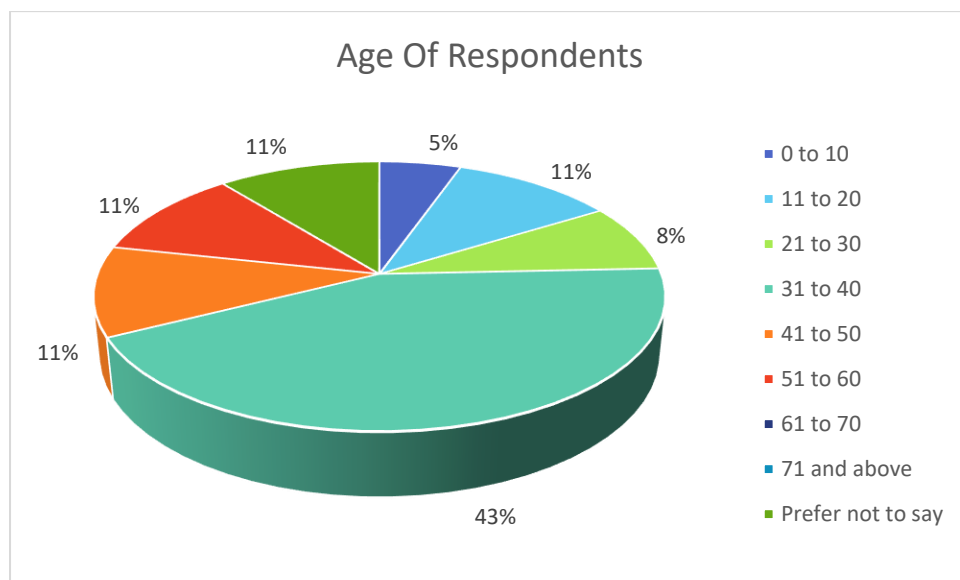
Feedback highlighted strong support for investment in the play area. Respondents would like to see a larger, more modern and inclusive space that provides a greater variety of play opportunities, caters for a wider age range, offers improved supporting facilities for families, and addresses ongoing maintenance and safety concerns.

Respondents also highlighted the importance for other facilities. Picnic tables, benches and seating, and pathways with different textures were all strongly supported, demonstrating a desire for the site to function as a welcoming community space where families can spend time together. Accessibility was a recurring theme, with respondents requesting inclusive play equipment and facilities suitable for wheelchair users and children of varying abilities.

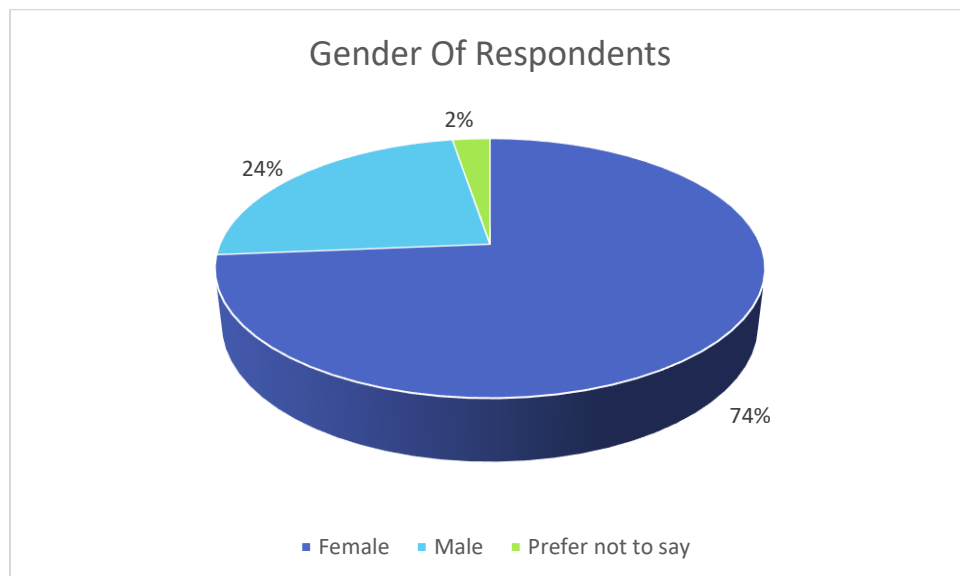
Children most enjoy activities that involve active physical play, with climbing, sliding, swinging and spinning emerging as the most popular play activities. Reflecting this, respondents identified climbing frames, slides and swings as the priority equipment for future investment. Additional suggestions included zip lines, monkey bars, trampolines, roundabouts and larger multi-play structures that encourage exploration and imaginative play.

About the respondents

Of the 37 respondents, the largest age group was 31 to 40 years old (43%). All other age groups accounted for 11% or less of responses, and 11% preferred not to disclose their age.

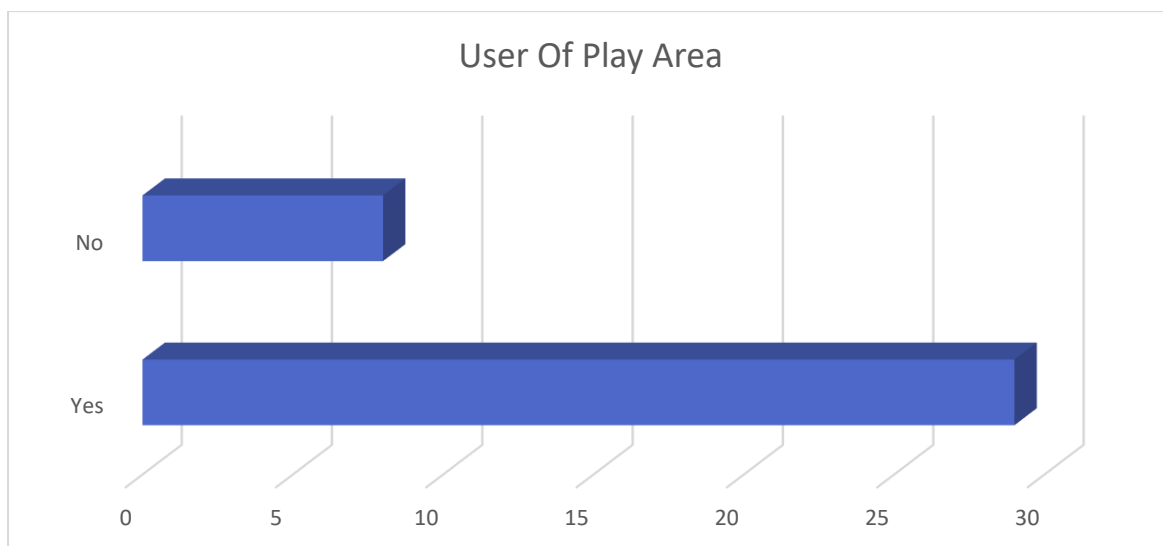


Of the 38 respondents, 74% were female (28), 24% were male (9), and 2% preferred not to say(1).



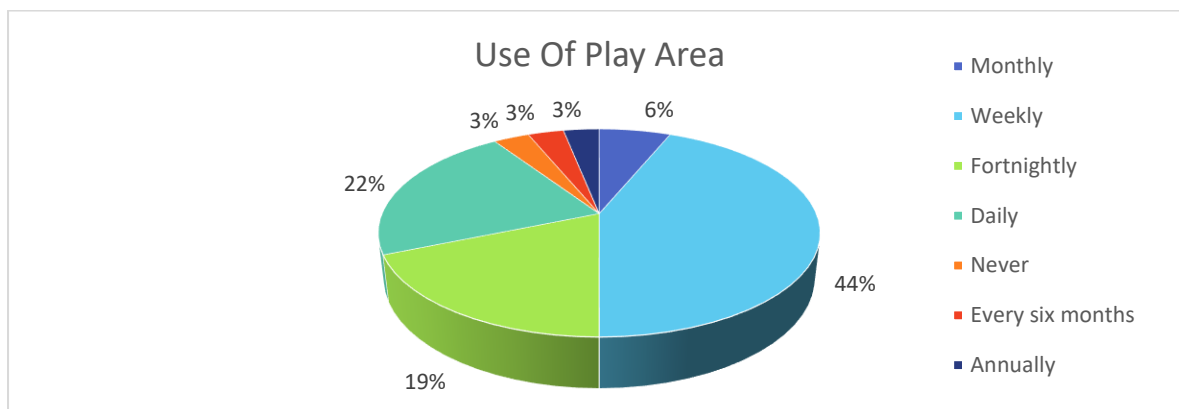
Are you a local resident or user of this play area?

Of the 37 respondents who answered this question, the majority 29 (78%) answered "Yes", while 8 (22%) answered "No".



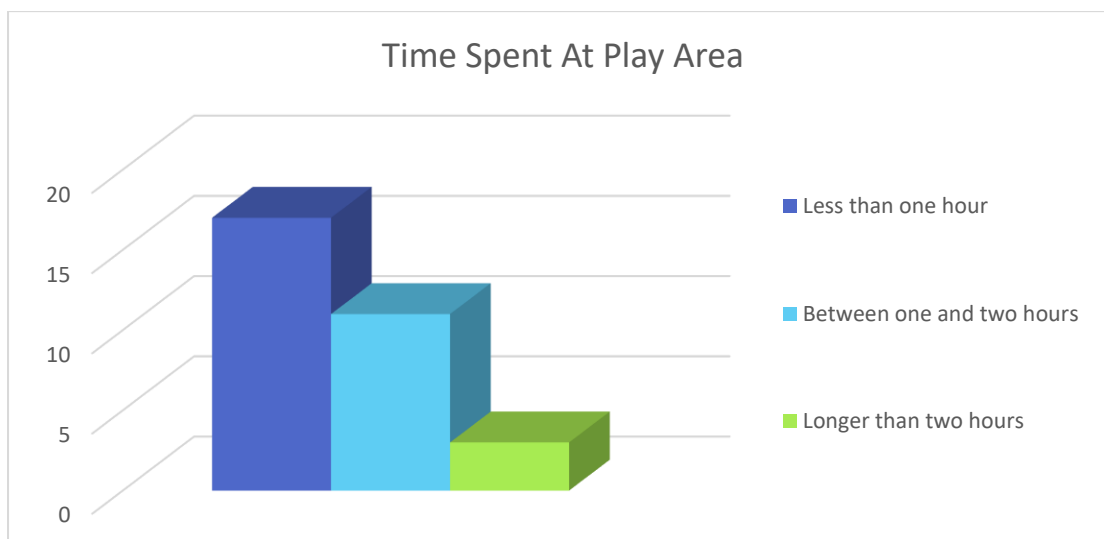
How often do you use the play area?

Of the 35 respondents, weekly was the most common frequency, with 40% reporting this response. A further 20% engaged daily, while 17% reported engaging fortnightly. Less frequent was reported by a smaller number of respondents, with 6% selecting monthly and 3% selecting every six months, annually, or never.



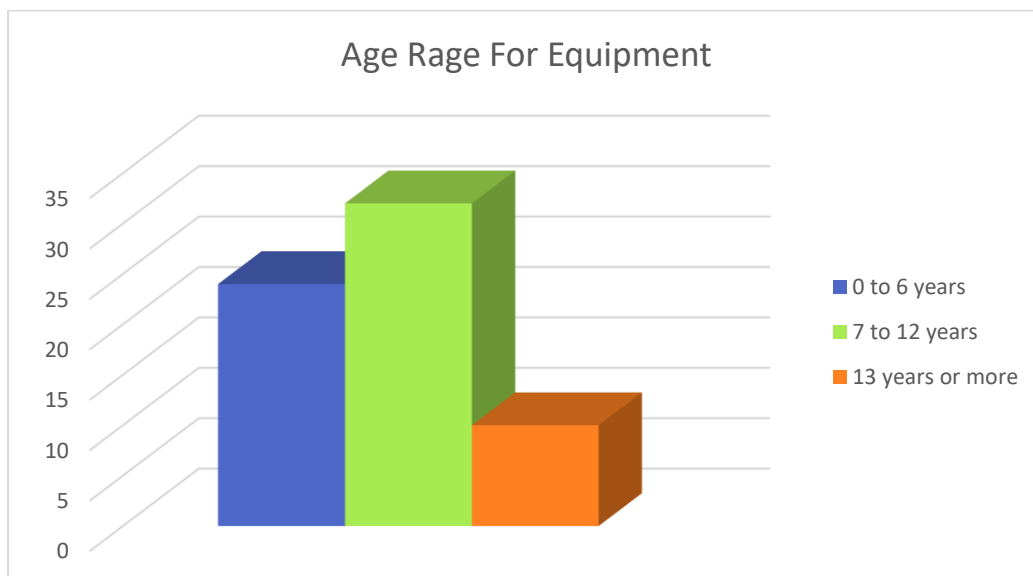
How long do you spend in the play area?

Of the 31 respondents, the majority (55%) reported spending less than one hour on the activity. A further 35% spent between one and two hours, while only 10% spent longer than two hours.



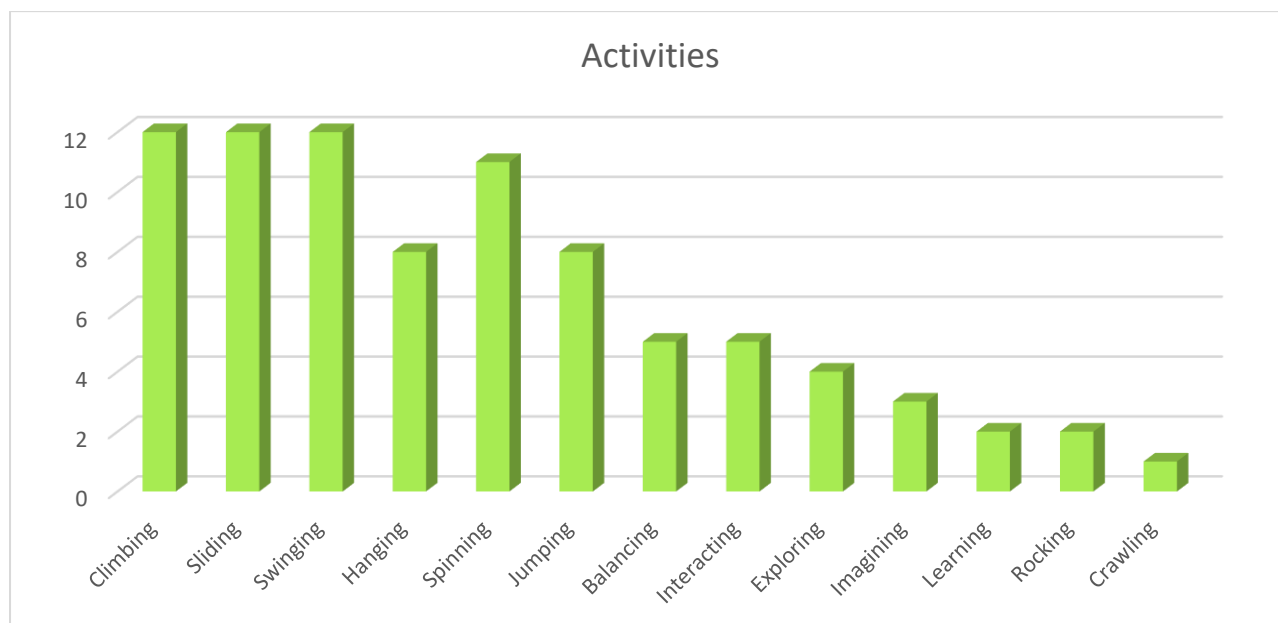
What age range do you think the equipment should be suitable for?

Of the 37 respondents, the most commonly represented age group was 7 to 12 years, selected by 86% of respondents. This was followed by 0 to 6 years, which was selected by 65% of respondents. 27% of respondents selected 13 years or more.



What activities do you like best?

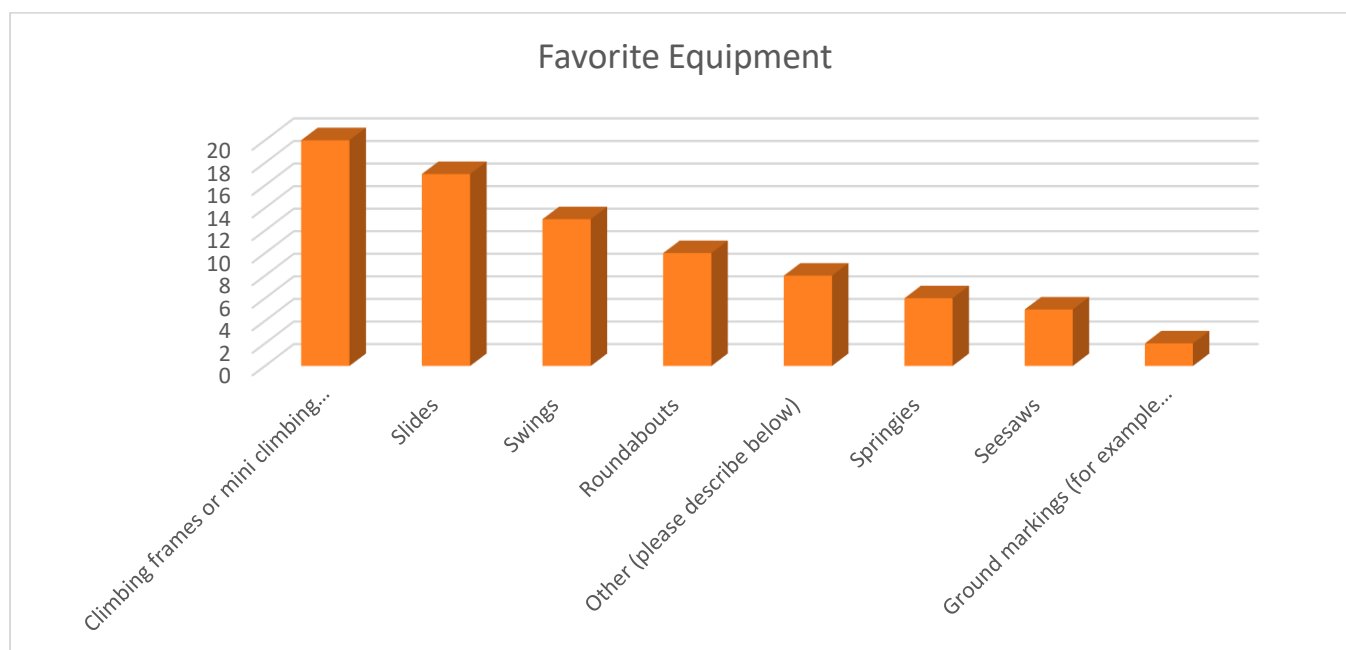
The most popular activities were climbing, sliding and swinging, each selected by 32% of respondents. Spinning was also highly popular, chosen by 30% of respondents. Activities such as hanging and jumping were selected by around 22% of respondents, while balancing and interacting were each chosen by 14%. Fewer respondents selected exploring, imagining, learning, rocking, or crawling.



What play equipment do you like best?

The most popular equipment choice was climbing frames or mini climbing walls or boulders, selected by 54% of respondents. Slides were the second most popular option, chosen by 46%, followed by swings at 35%.

Roundabouts were selected by just over a quarter of respondents (27%), while springies and seesaws were less frequently chosen, at 16% and 14% respectively. A notable 22% of respondents selected 'Other'



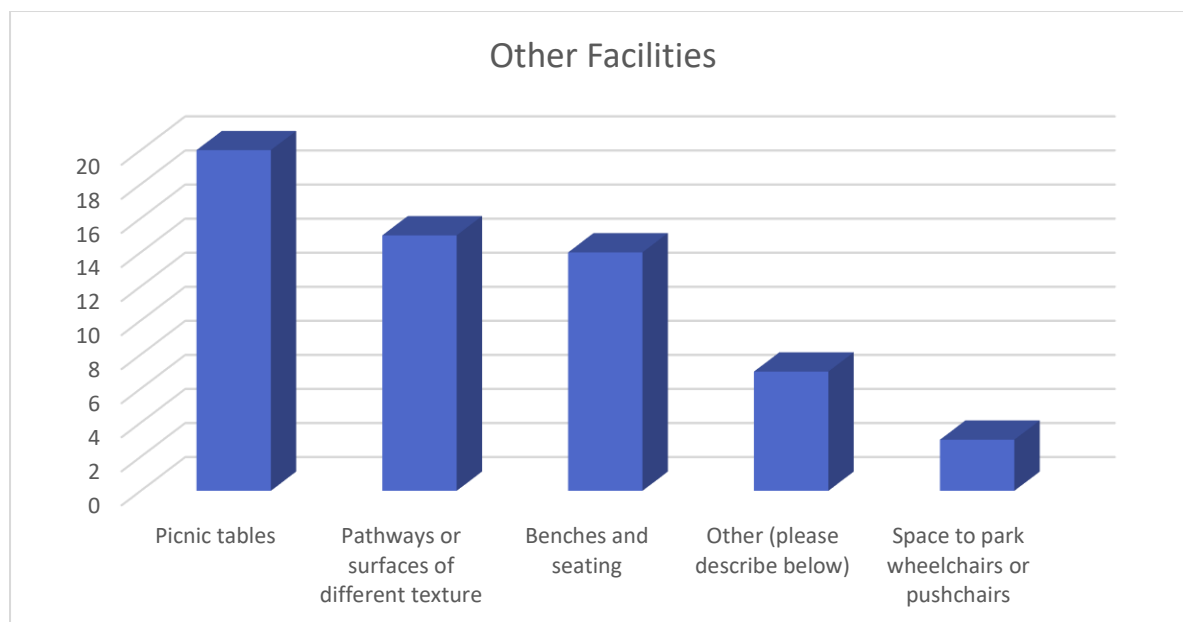
Other suggestions were...

Zip line x4
Trampoline x2
More inclusive play equipment for children with disabilities x2
Facilities for teenagers, such as benches

Enclosed sports goals x2
Green hanging play feature
Large or small themed play structures (for example, castles)

Would you like us to include any other facilities in the play area?

The most popular supporting feature was picnic tables, selected by 54% of respondents. This was followed by pathways or surfaces of different texture (41%) and benches and seating (38%). A smaller proportion of respondents (8%) highlighted the need for space to park wheelchairs or pushchairs, while 19% selected 'Other'



Other suggestions were...

Basketball and 5 a side football goal like at Boroughbridge
Football goals
Slide and climbing frame
Seesaw more zip lines slides more things to hang on
Monkey bars slides
Slides, sensory garden, mud kitchen
Pool

Do you have any additional comments or suggestions for the play area?

The play area should be significantly larger and make full use of the available grass space, as the current park is too small and quickly becomes overcrowded
The zip wire is outside the fencing which doesn't help as a parent with children of different ages.
The current area works well for younger children but would benefit from more facilities for older children and teenagers, including seating, social spaces, and an area for ball games.
The park doesn't really cater to really young children, more equipment for younger children so we can play for longer.
A dedicated multi-use ball games area with football goals and space for football, basketball, and general ball play for older children and teenagers.

Make a concerted effort to include accessible equipment in all play areas.
More benches (x2).
Picnic benches / picnic tables (x2).
Grass area is nice for picnics in the summer.
Maintain the grass and hedges more.
Better maintenance of the current equipment and gates, current gate isn't secure so little ones can open it and run off.
Concerns about teenagers and adults using the park for drinking and drug use, making it a loitering hotspot.
Stop people parking on the grass next to the play area.
Ongoing issues with litter, broken glass, and excessive noise, which affect safety for young children and disturb nearby residents.
Add a slide and a climbing frame, better climbing equipment which children could run around on and slide down x5
Tunnel slide with a climbing frame attached.
Monkey bars x2.
More zip lines / another zip line x3.
Longer slides for babies and older kids.
Roundabout.
Seesaw.
Spinning seats.
Trampoline.
More play activities and equipment for all ages.
Large play structures that allow children to play, explore and use their imagination.
Pool.
Gaming PC.
More parks should include equipment for children with physical disabilities, such as a wheelchair-accessible swing. Every child deserves the opportunity to play alongside their peers, and inclusive equipment would make a significant difference to families who currently have limited access to suitable play opportunities.
Simple, engaging information boards placed around the park could help parents understand how everyday play supports their child's development while providing ideas to encourage interaction and conversation. For example: • 5 things you can see (visual) • 4 things you can touch (tactile) • 3 things you can hear (auditory) • 2 emotions you feel while at the park (interoception and emotional awareness) • 1 movement you enjoyed today (vestibular)
The design of the equipment, choice of materials and impact-absorbing surfaces all play an important role in helping children to take appropriate risks safely. Children learn through appropriately managed risk, and well-designed play environments encourage them to develop balance, coordination, strength, resilience, confidence and problem-solving skills while giving parents reassurance that they can explore within an environment that has been thoughtfully designed with safety in mind.