

### 5.2.3 Play

As children grow they pass through various stages of development. Play is a fundamental part of childhood. It enables children to develop social skills, form friendships, develop physical skills and learn about and become confident in their environment. There are a number of play areas, multi use play areas (for 5-a-side and basketball) and skate park facilities throughout Walsall. The latter are often used for skate boards and BMX bikes as well as in-line and roller skates.

A draft Walsall Play Strategy has been written, which will require further consultation before it's presented to Cabinet for approval in 2014. The Play Strategy provides a framework for establishing access to play, provision of play and quality of play. It creates a mechanism for improving play delivery and community participation. Most importantly, it identifies priorities in light of equalities and resourcing issues and sets the vision for the next 5 year life time of the strategy.

#### Indicator

- *The number of play areas, multi use games areas and skate park facilities*

#### Priorities for action:

- *There is a need to increase the amount and quality of play and youth provision in the borough, particularly for children with disabilities, whose opportunities for play are currently more restricted (Barnardos, 2004)*
- *Where possible retain, improve or replace leisure facilities including sports pitches*