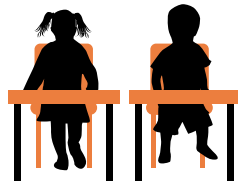


TIGAR

Key messages

Born too soon – how being born early might affect a child's health and their progress at school

In the UK, **about 7%** of babies are born preterm. This means that, on average, two or three children in a class of 30 pupils may be born preterm.



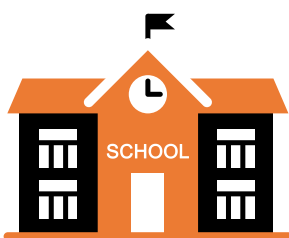
Half the children

in our study had at least one hospital admission by their 10th birthday. The more preterm a child was born, the more likely they were to have hospital admissions.



In general, children were less likely to have **hospital admissions** as they got older, but admissions were still more common in the children born most preterm.

The most common reason for **hospital admissions** at all ages was infection – this was true for all children, including those born preterm. The most common types of infection were in the lung (such as pneumonia), or the nose, throat and sinus (such as colds).



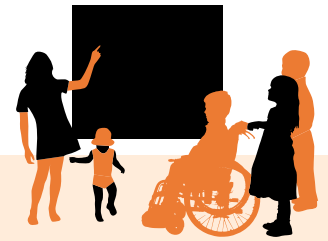
About 10% of all children had special educational needs (SEN) at some point during primary school. The more preterm a child was born, the more likely they were to have SEN. Among preterm and term children, the most common reason for having SEN was learning difficulty.

The more preterm a child was born, the less likely they were to reach the expected level in Key Stage 2 SATs assessments at the end of primary school.

Children born at less than 32 weeks were less likely to achieve 5 GCSE passes (A*-C or 4-9 including English and Mathematics).



Supporting children born preterm



For parents:

Pre-school children: concerns about child health or development should be discussed with the child's health visitor and/or GP

School-aged children: concerns about child development or progress at school should be discussed with the child's teacher and/or GP



From birth to 5 years, all families receive regular developmental checks, information and advice for their child from health visitors*

Reduce the risk of infections through handwashing, keeping surfaces clean, throwing away used tissues and avoiding smoking. Keep vaccinations up to date

Children born preterm may be assessed more often**. Parents should attend any follow-up appointments offered

*www.e-lfh.org.uk/programmes/healthy-child-programme/

**NICE recommends that children born before 30 weeks of gestation, or those born at 30-36 weeks of gestation who have additional risk factors for developmental problems, should be monitored and assessed up to 2 years of age by neonatal health professionals, or up to 4 years of age for children born before 28 weeks of gestation. www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng72

For education and health professionals:



Children born preterm should be followed up and monitored closely by health professionals*

Education professionals should receive training about the potential needs of children born preterm**

Preterm birth may affect children's development and learning, and their need for support at school

Schools may wish to encourage parents to share details of their child's birth history to enable staff to better support children born preterm

Education professionals, early years practitioners and school staff can support families by being aware of the potential needs of children born very preterm

*www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng72 **www.pretermbirth.info