Children increasingly missing school
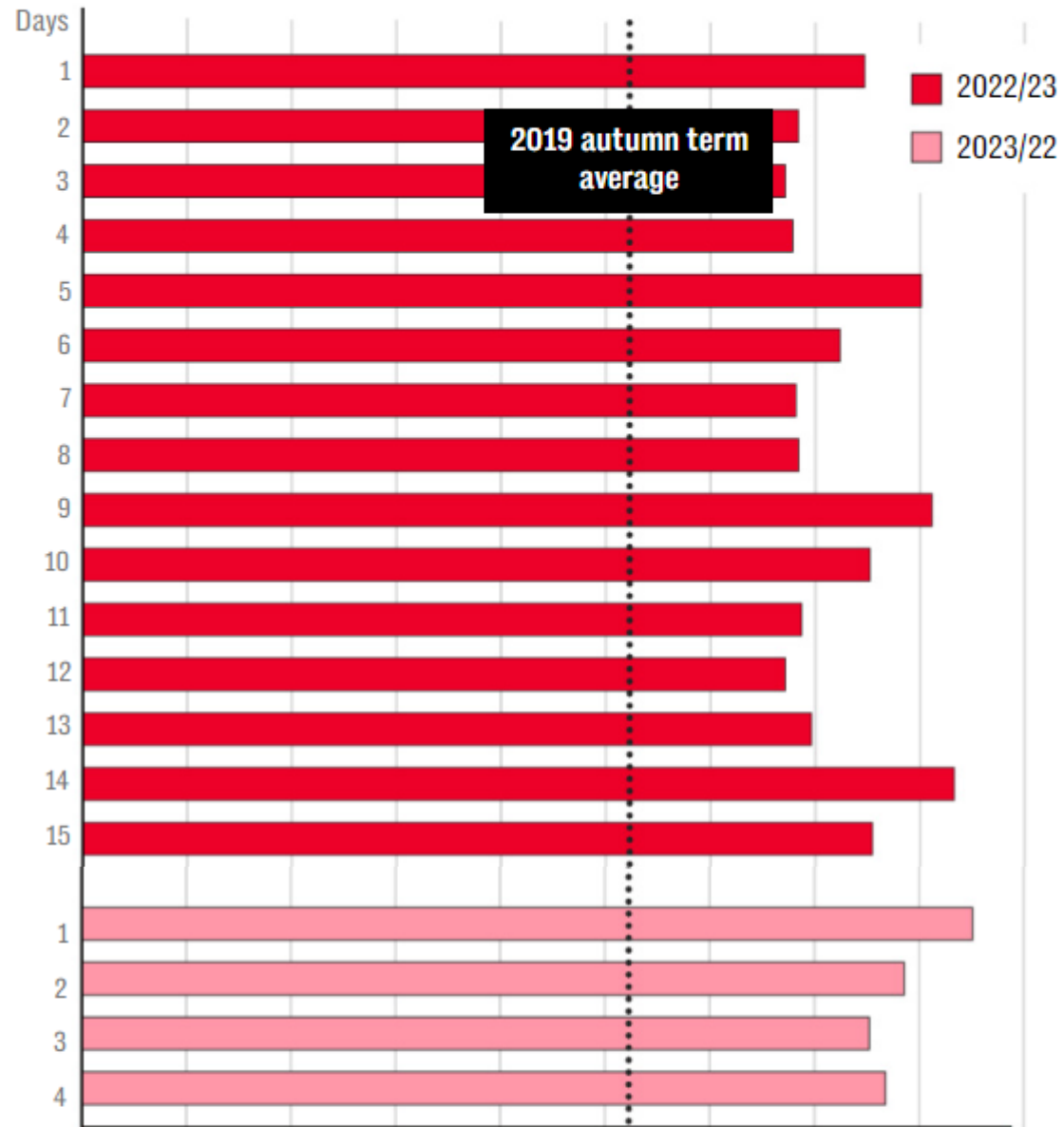
Proportion of children with unauthorised absences by days into Autumn term

2019 autumn term average

Legend: 2022/23, 2023/22

Days: 1–15 (2022/23), 1–4 (2023/22)

Comment on the graph

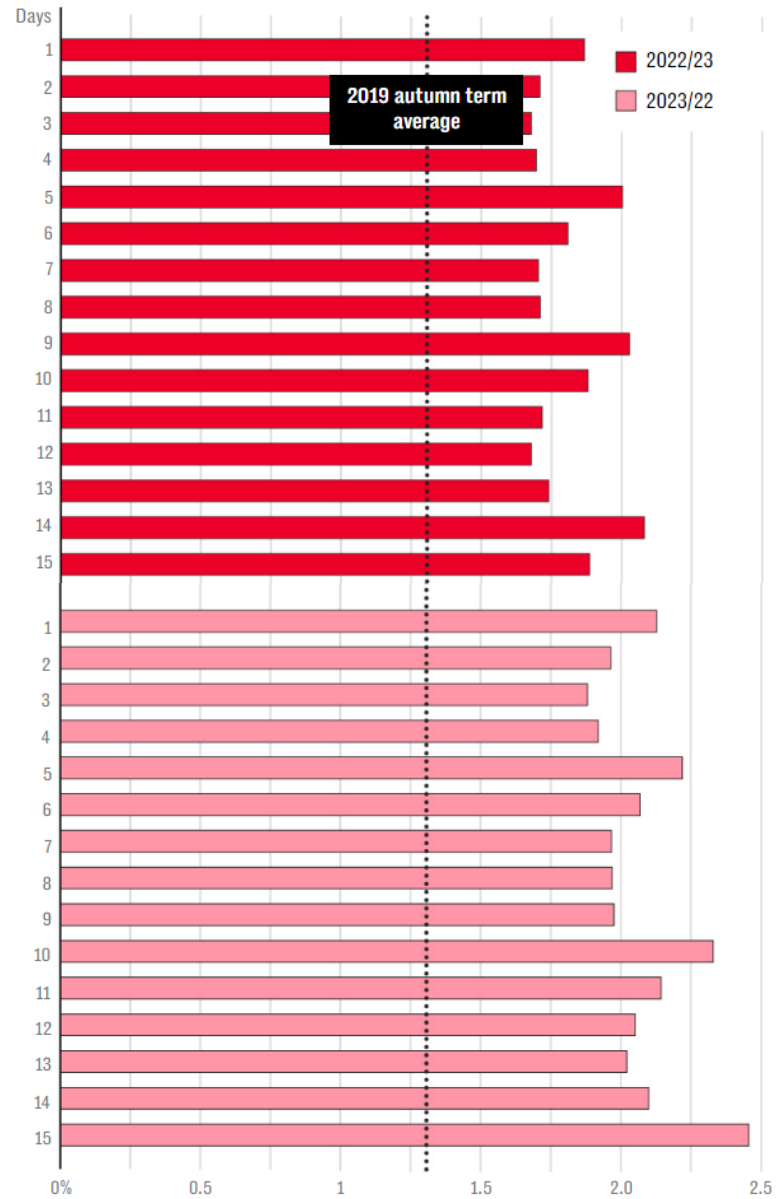**Children increasingly missing school**

Proportion of children with unauthorised absences by days into Autumn term

Days

2022/23
2023/22

2019 autumn term average

0%   0.5   1   1.5   2   2.5

Comment on the graph

What The Graph 46: teacher notes

Notes/comments

- This appeared in the Daily Telegraph, as part of an article about the increased levels of pupil absence since lockdown.
- The first slide just shows the top of the graph (so the text and digits are legible) and the full graph appears on slide 2.
- It is poorly presented! The x-axis is rather important but only appears at the very bottom of the graph (necessitating a scroll down to see it); it could have been put at the top (and/or halfway down) too.
- There is a typo in the labels: Red is 2022/23, whereas pink is for 2023/22 ! Should the second one be 202<u>1</u>/22, or is the second one 2023/2<u>4</u>?
- Given we are talking about the start of the autumn term, is there any need to have "2022/23" – wouldn't "2022" be as clear?
- Not knowing which colour is which year means we can't decide whether things are getting better (pink to red) or worse (red to pink).
- Why put the detail of having each <u>day</u> separately? Is there enough variation by day for that to be worthwhile? If so then should we consider when weekends fell? (Eg if Day 9 Red was a Monday and Day 10 Pink was a Monday, might that explain a jump upwards on those days?). What about schools that start on different dates?
- Better to put the two Day 1s (Red/Pink) next to each other, and then Day 2s, etc? Is Pink always bigger than red? Can we stack the bars?
- 2019 Autumn Term average has been shown. Presumably 2019 because this was pre-Covid. Why might it not be fair to have the <u>average</u> for the term here? What if absence decreases throughout the term, for example?
- This graph is for <u>unauthorised</u> absences. These are for skiving, family holidays, where parents weren't organised enough to send medical absence info, etc. Maybe some parents 'authorise' absences that others do not. Given that the article is about "Children missing school" should we look at all absences and not just unauthorised ones?

Source: https://www.telegraph.co.uk/education-and-careers/2024/01/11/work-from-home-impact-school-attendance/