

# Inequalities in Children's Services Intervention Rates: new evidence, further questions

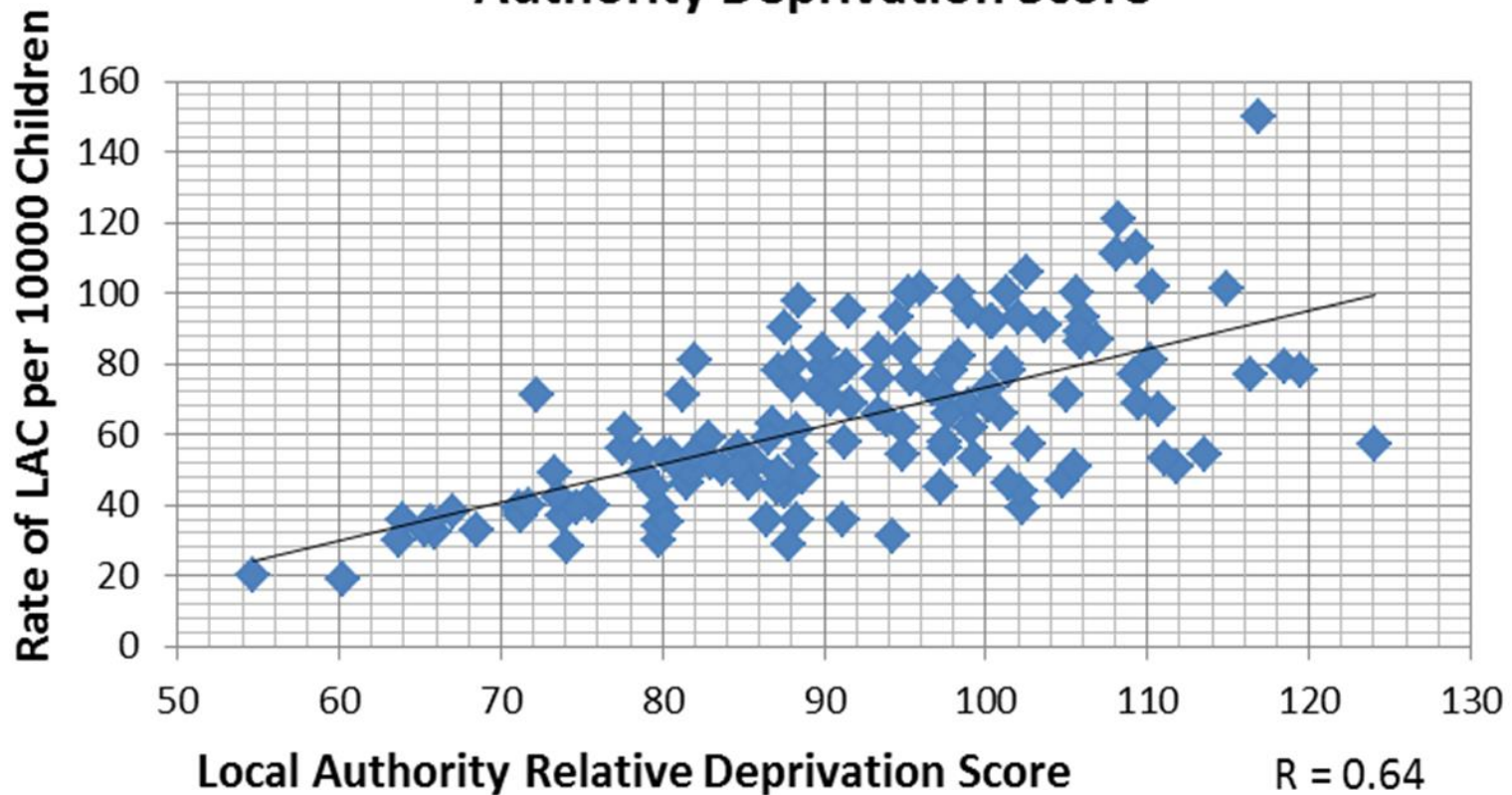


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# Child Welfare Inequalities: England

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## Rates of Looked After Children (LAC) 2012 by Local Authority Deprivation Score



# Child Welfare Inequalities and Health Inequalities

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By comparison with health inequalities

Very little recent detailed research, for example, about the circumstances of families or inequalities in rates of intervention below LA level

Very little theorising – explanations of the relationship between deprivation and inequalities in intervention rates

Language of ‘variations’, ‘differences’ and ‘disparity’ not inequalities

Few policies aimed at reducing inequalities

# Child Welfare Inequalities: Definition

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Unequal chances, experiences and outcomes of child welfare that are systematically associated with social advantage/disadvantage.

Rates of intervention as markers of inequalities. But a complex issue. Higher death rates clearly worse. Higher CPP rates might mean safer childhoods.

# Child Welfare Inequalities: Key Dimensions

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- Who receives child welfare interventions (and why)?
- Which children get what kinds of interventions (and why)?
- What differences are there in the childhood outcomes between children involved with child welfare services and those who are not (and why)?
- What differences are there in the adult outcomes between children involved with child welfare services and those who are not (and why)?
- What policies and interventions reduce inequalities in child welfare: upstream, midstream and downstream?

# Deprivation and Children's Services Outcomes

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## Aim:

to examine the role of deprivation in explaining differences in key children's services' interventions between and within local authorities (LAs)

## Objectives:

- to relate core markers of safeguarding processes (the rates of LAC and CPP) to Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) scores for small areas within LAs by re-analysing routinely collected and new data
- to begin to explore the implications of the analysis for the allocation of resources, workforce skills and intervention strategies;
- to design a programme of subsequent studies to explore these issues further.

# Study Methods

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## 14 Local Authorities in the English Midlands

Over 10% of all children England and of LAC and CPP

Routine data for all CPP and LAC: age, gender, ethnicity, disability, reason for CPP and legal status in LAC at 31.3.12

plus

Neighbourhood (Lower Layer Super Output Area) of origin.

Interviews with senior managers to provide contextual information and subsequent telephone focus groups with front line staff.

# Analysis

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Sorted LSOAs in our sample by their national deprivation rank and divided into deciles (10 groups of 10%).

Analysed intervention and identity data by deprivation level as deciles or quintiles.

Where we refer to decile 10 in our sample, it means those LSOAs in the midlands sample that are in the 10% most deprived LSOAs nationally.



# Summary

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- Child welfare inequalities reflect the intersection of childhood disadvantage and intervention rates.
- Children are over-represented in deprived neighbourhoods
- Some kinds of children are particularly liable to deprivation
- The distribution of children by deprivation interacts with child welfare practice to produce very large inequalities in a child's chances of being on a CPP or being a LAC.

# Deprivation Amongst Child Population

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**Table 1: Percentage of child population living in each quintile of neighbourhoods (MSOAs) by deprivation.**

1 = most affluent 20% of neighbourhoods; 5 = least affluent.

Deprivation Quintile	1	2	3	4	5
Child population in England	19.4%	18.3%	18.5%	20.1%	23.7%
Child Population Midlands Sample	12.1%	15.9%	15.7%	18.1%	38.2%
All 0-4	10.1%	14.1%	15.1%	18.7%	42.0%
Birmingham	2.3%	3.8%	13.0%	16.2%	64.7%
Warwickshire	30.3%	24.4%	20.5%	16.8%	8.0%

# Key Findings 1: Very Large Inequalities

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Very large inequalities in children's chances of being on a child protection plan or being a looked after child, systematically and significantly related to deprivation levels.

From published data:

A child in Blackpool had an 8 times greater chance of being a LAC at 31.3.13 than a child in Richmond Upon Thames.

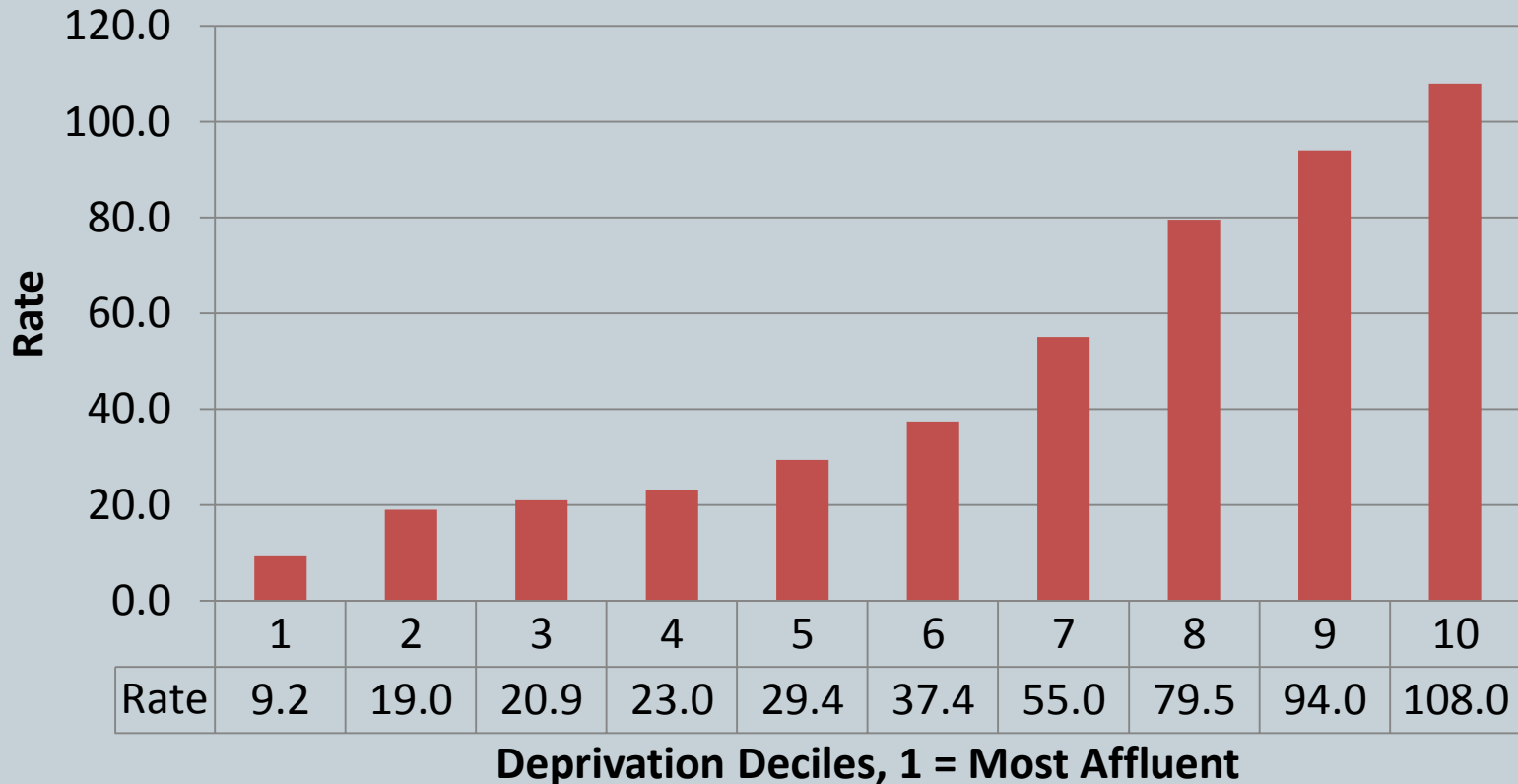
A child in Coventry had a 2.3 times greater chance of being on a CPP at 31.3.13 than a child in Staffordshire.

A child in Wolverhampton had a 3 times greater chance of being looked after than a child in Shropshire

# Key Findings 1: Very large inequalities

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**Looked After Children Rates per 10,000 Children by Deprivation Decile, Midlands Sample, 31.3.12**



# Key Findings 1: Very large inequalities

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## CPP and LAC Rates and Numbers in Deciles 1 and 10

	CPP	CPP	LAC	LAC
	Decile 1	Decile 1	Decile 1	Decile 10
Rates	6.3	68.5	9.2	108.0
Numbers	50	1823	73	2874
Ratio 1:10	CPP	36.5	LAC	39.4

# Key Findings 2: A Gradient of Inequality

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There is a gradient in rates across levels of deprivation, just as there is a gradient in other outcomes (health, education) for children across the whole of society: CPP and LAC are not found only in areas of high deprivation.

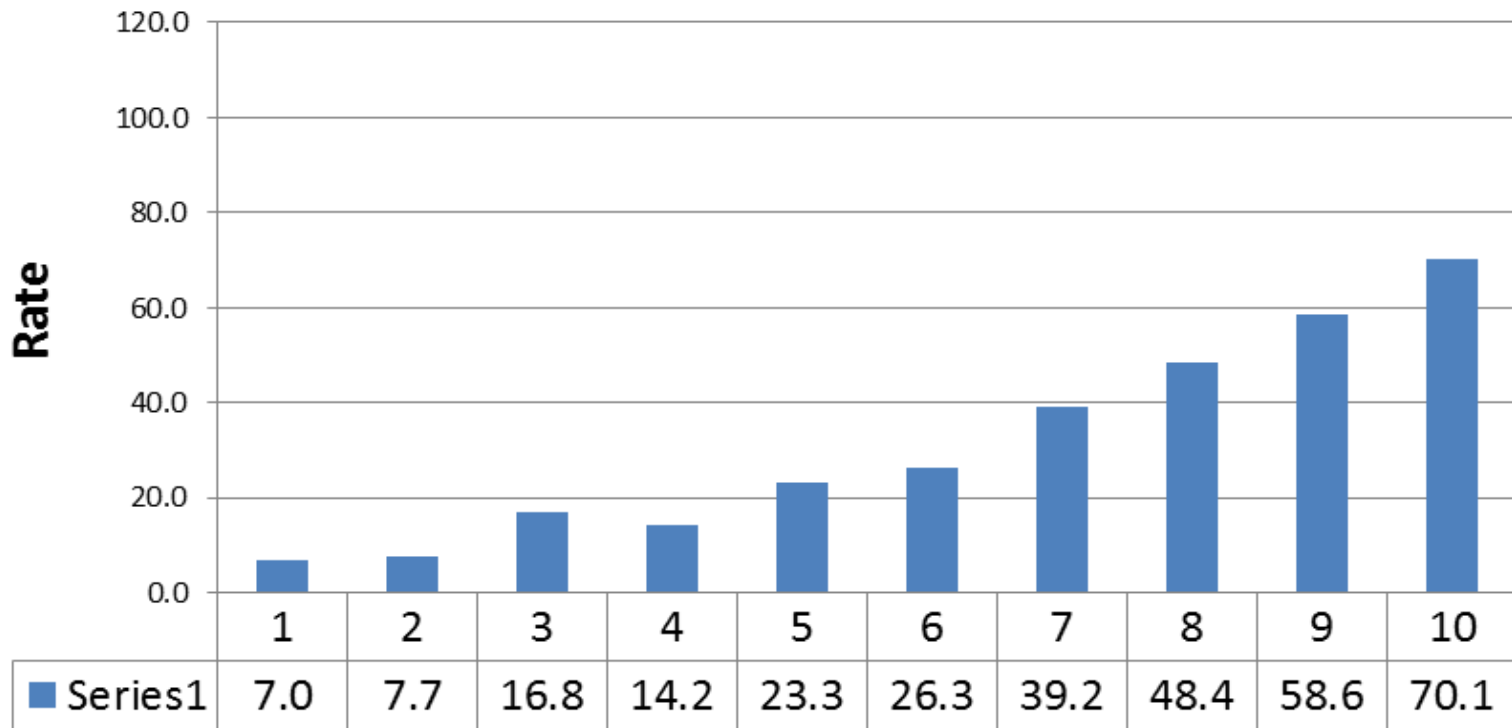
60% of CPP and LAC live in the most deprived 20% of neighbourhoods.

40% live in more affluent 80% of neighbourhoods.

# Key Findings 2: A Gradient of Inequality

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**Child Protection Plan Rates per 10,000 Children, by Deprivation Decile, Midlands Sample, 31.3.12**



**Deprivation Deciles, 1 = Most Affluent**

# Key Findings 2: A Gradient of Inequality

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Child safeguarding is not only about families in poverty.

Reducing inequalities in rates between and within areas is a possible policy objective underpinned by social work's commitment to social justice.

If we could reduce the steepness of the gradient of deprivation or the impact of deprivation on family life, we could reduce the demands on children's services.



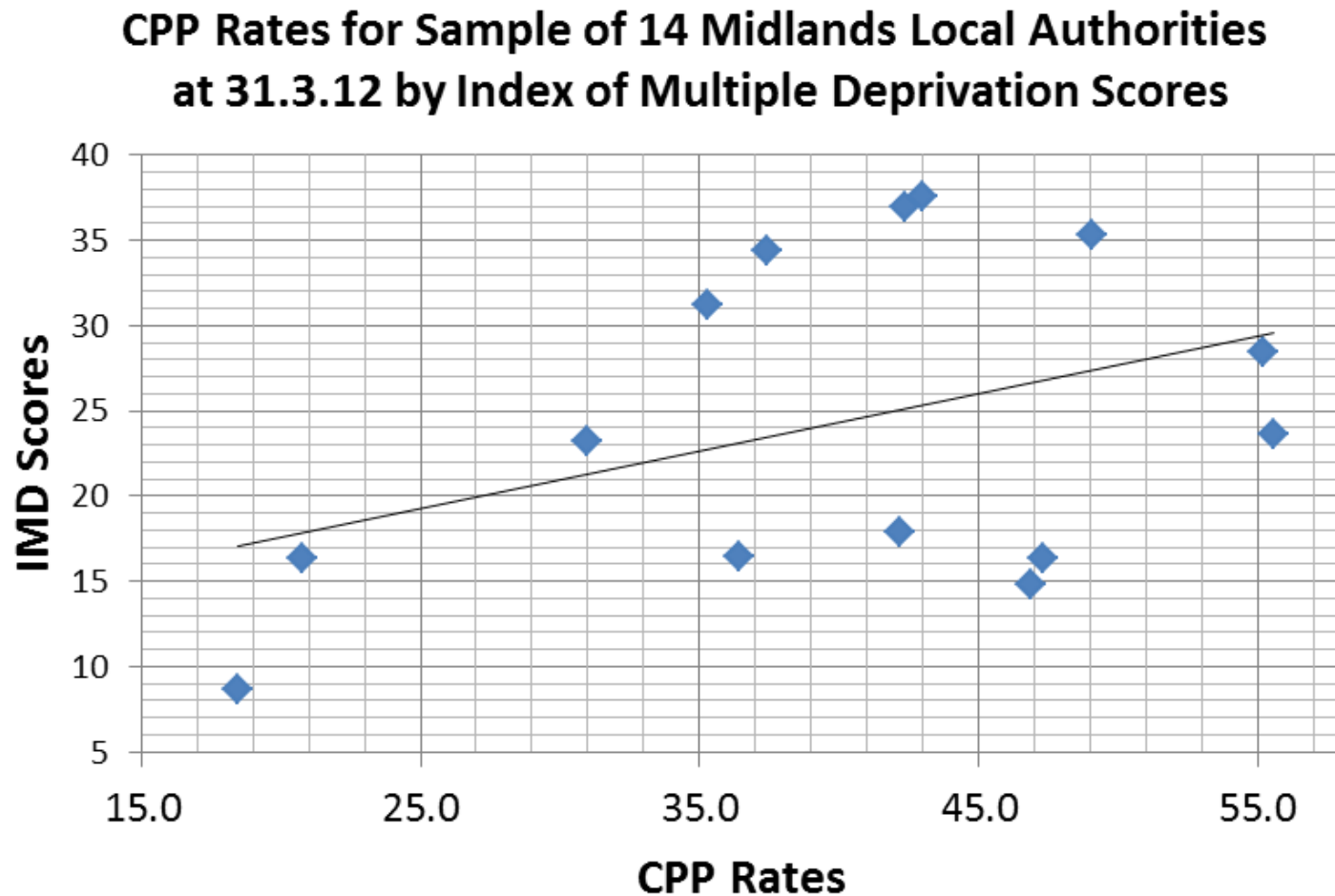
## Key Findings 3: An Inverse Care Law

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Overall a child's chances of an extreme child welfare intervention is much greater at higher levels of deprivation, but **for a given level of deprivation a child in a more affluent local authority is more likely to be on a CPP or to be a looked after child.**

# Key Findings 3: An Inverse Care Law

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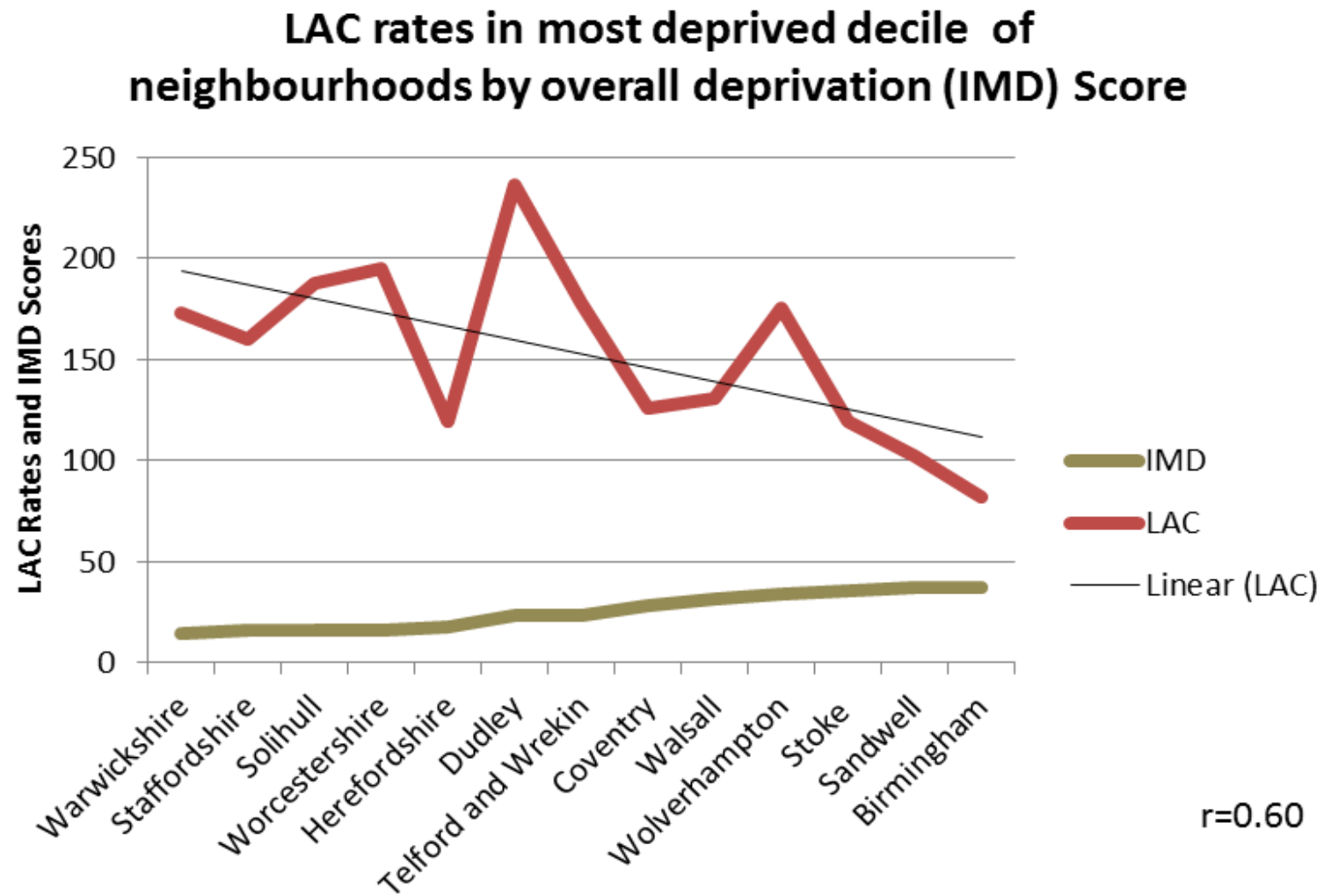
# Key Findings 3: An Inverse Care Law

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		IMD Score	CPP Rate in Decile 10	Overall CPP Rate
Herefordshire		17.91	238.1	42.2
Sandwell		36.97	50.2	41.9
Worcestershire		14.77	155.8	35.9
Wolverhampton		34.41	66.6	37.2

# Key Findings 3: An Inverse Care Law

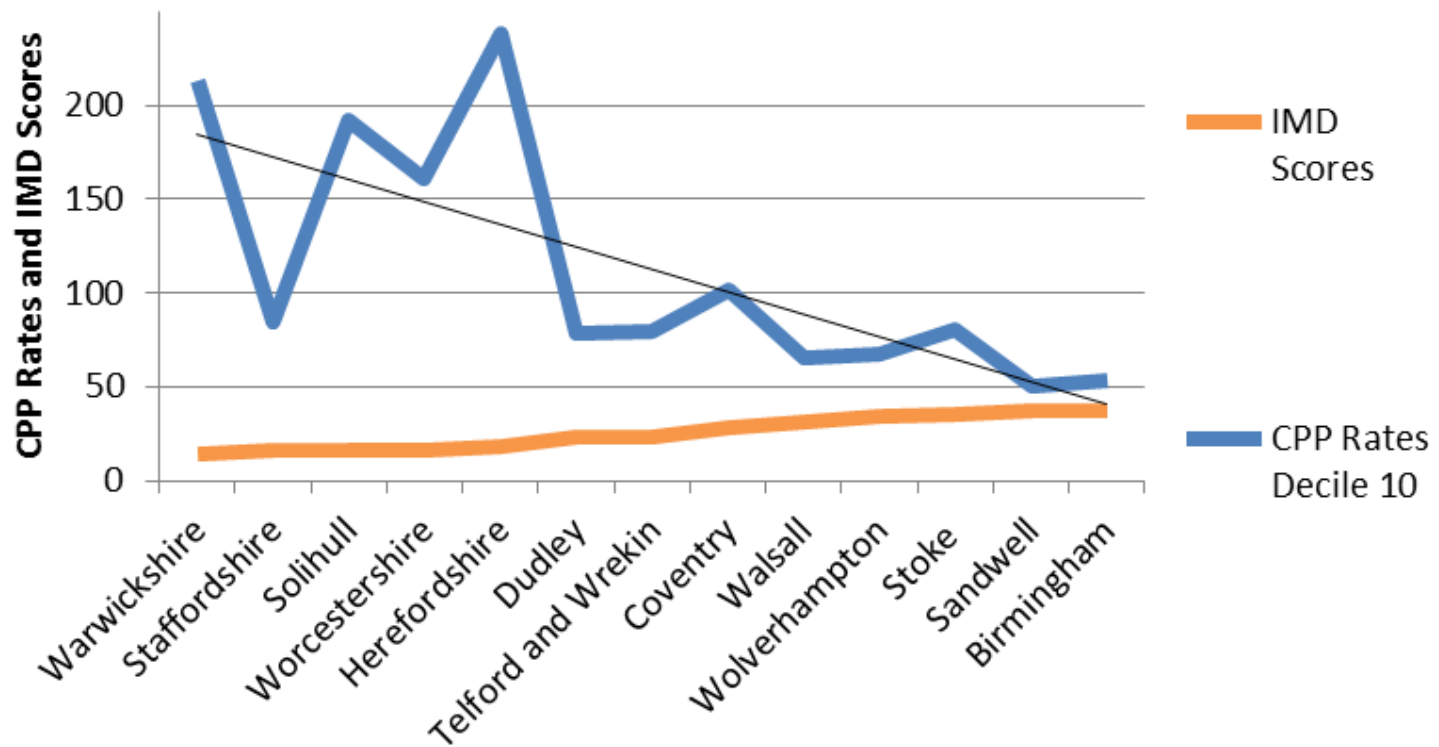
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# Key Findings 3: An Inverse Care Law

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**CPP Rates in the most deprived decile of neighbourhoods by overall deprivation (IMD) score.**



# Key Finding 4: Inequalities by Ethnicity

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children from black and mixed heritage backgrounds are over-represented among children who are looked after and Asian children tend to be under-represented (Owen and Statham 2009)

CIN, CPP and LAC Rates per 10,000 Children at 31.3.12 (Midlands Sample).

	White	Mixed	Asian	Black	Other	All
CIN	253.7	351.5	109.4	226.7	298.9	235.8
CPP	39.5	62.9	21.6	34.1	37.7	37.7
LAC	64.4	122.7	17.7	71.9	51.6	60.5

# Key Finding 4: Inequalities by Ethnicity

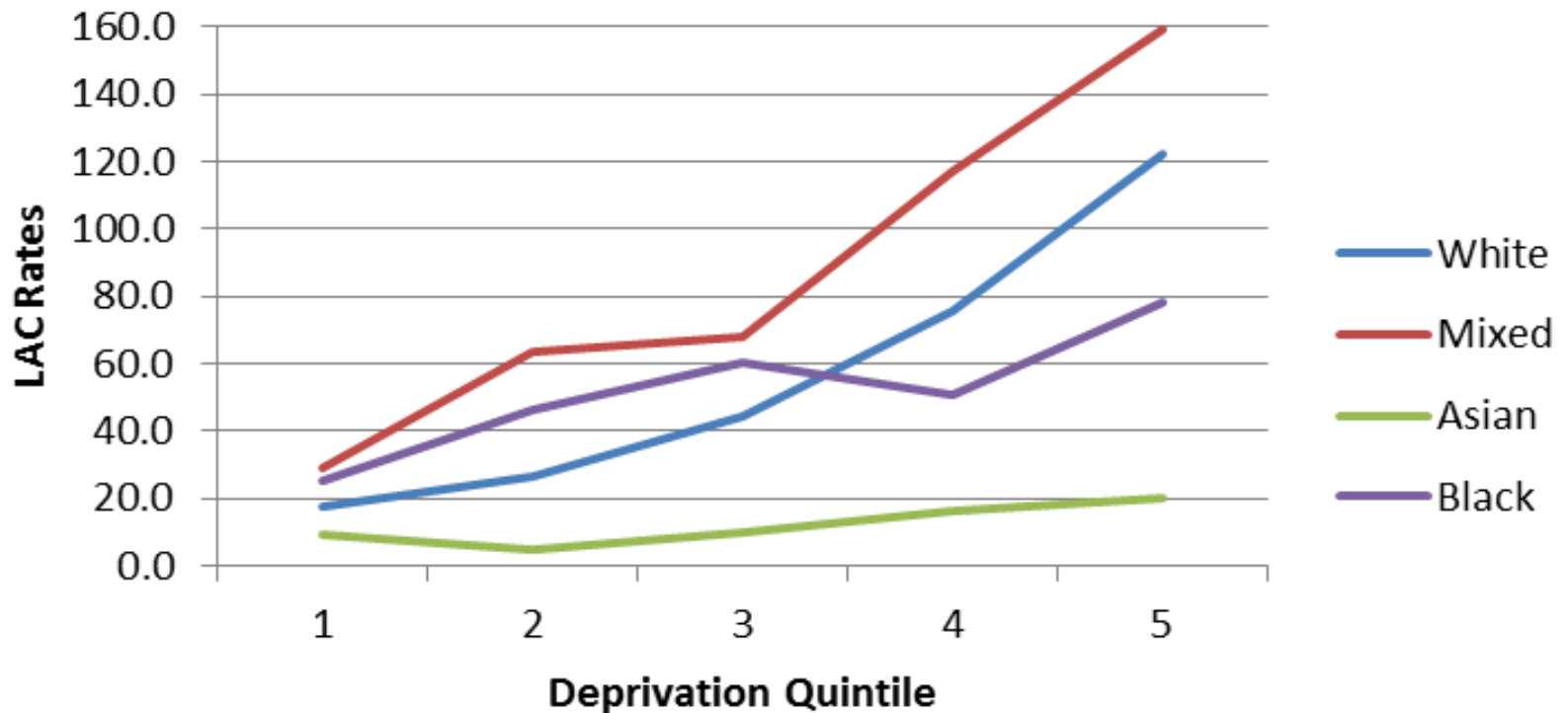
Table 10: Sample Population 0-17 by Ethnic Group and Deprivation Quintile - Percentages

Quintiles	1	2	3	4	5	ALL
White	15.1	19.7	18.2	19.3	27.8	100.0
Mixed	6.9	9.3	12.1	18.3	53.3	100.0
Asian	4.1	5.3	8.7	14.3	67.5	100.0
Black	1.5	2.9	6.3	12.7	76.5	100.0
Other	5.2	6.1	8.6	16.3	63.8	100.0
	12.1	15.9	15.7	18.1	38.2	100.0

# Key Finding 4: Inequalities by Ethnicity

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**Chart 3: LAC Rates by ethnic group and deprivation quintile**





# Key Findings 4: Inequality by Ethnicity

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## LAC Rates by Ethnic Group

Quintiles	1 to 3	4	5	All
White	30.2	75.5	122.1	64.4
Mixed	57.0	117.0	159.6	122.7
Asian	8.2	16.7	20.4	17.7
Black	51.4	50.8	78.3	71.9
Other	36.5	40.7	59.0	51.6
All	30.0	69.4	91.2	60.5

# Findings: Summary

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**Very large inequalities** in children's chances of a safeguarding intervention, systematically related to deprivation.

**A gradient in child welfare intervention rates:** only 60% children on CPP or LAC living in the most deprived 20% of neighbourhoods nationally.

**An 'inverse intervention law':** for equivalent levels of deprivation a child in a more affluent local authority overall is more likely to be on a CPP or to be a looked after child.

After controlling for deprivation, **Black children are much less likely than White children to be LAC in quintiles 4 and 5, Asian children in quintile 5 are six times less likely to be LAC than White children.**

# Acknowledgements

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For further details:

Bywaters, P. (2013) 'Inequalities in child welfare: towards a new policy, research and action agenda', British Journal of Social Work, online advanced access.

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