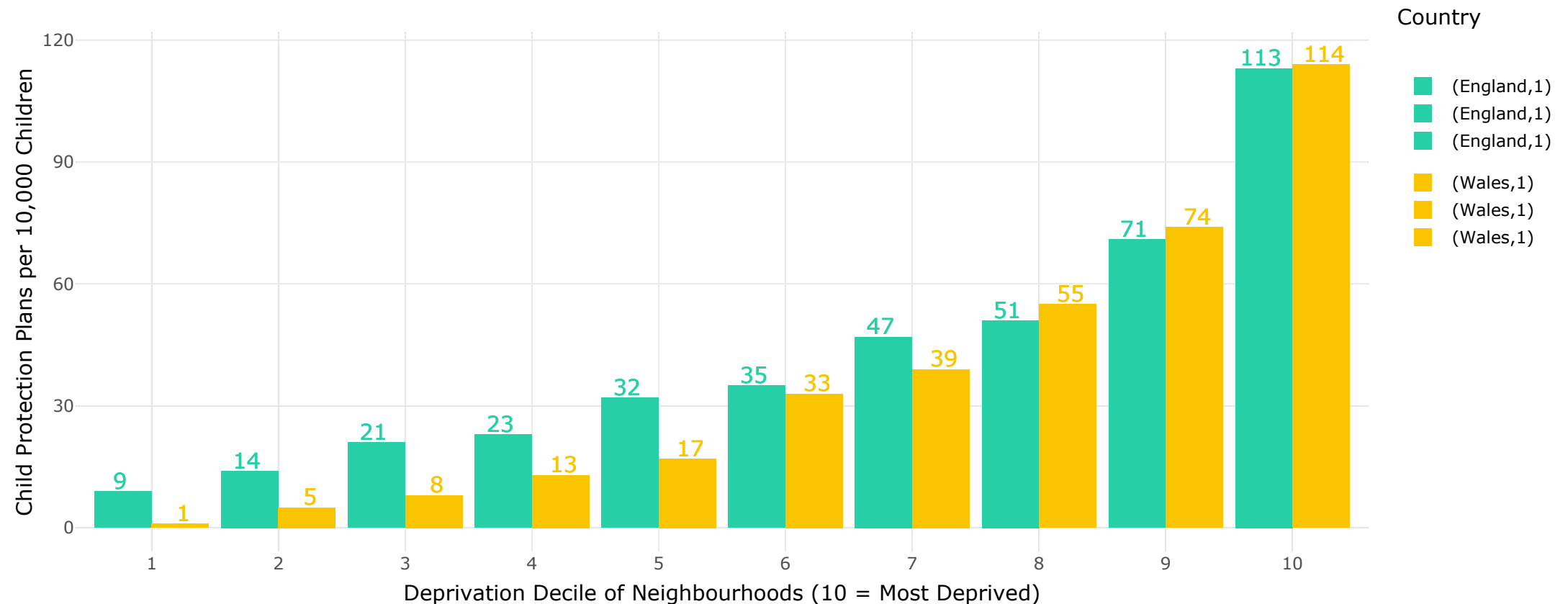


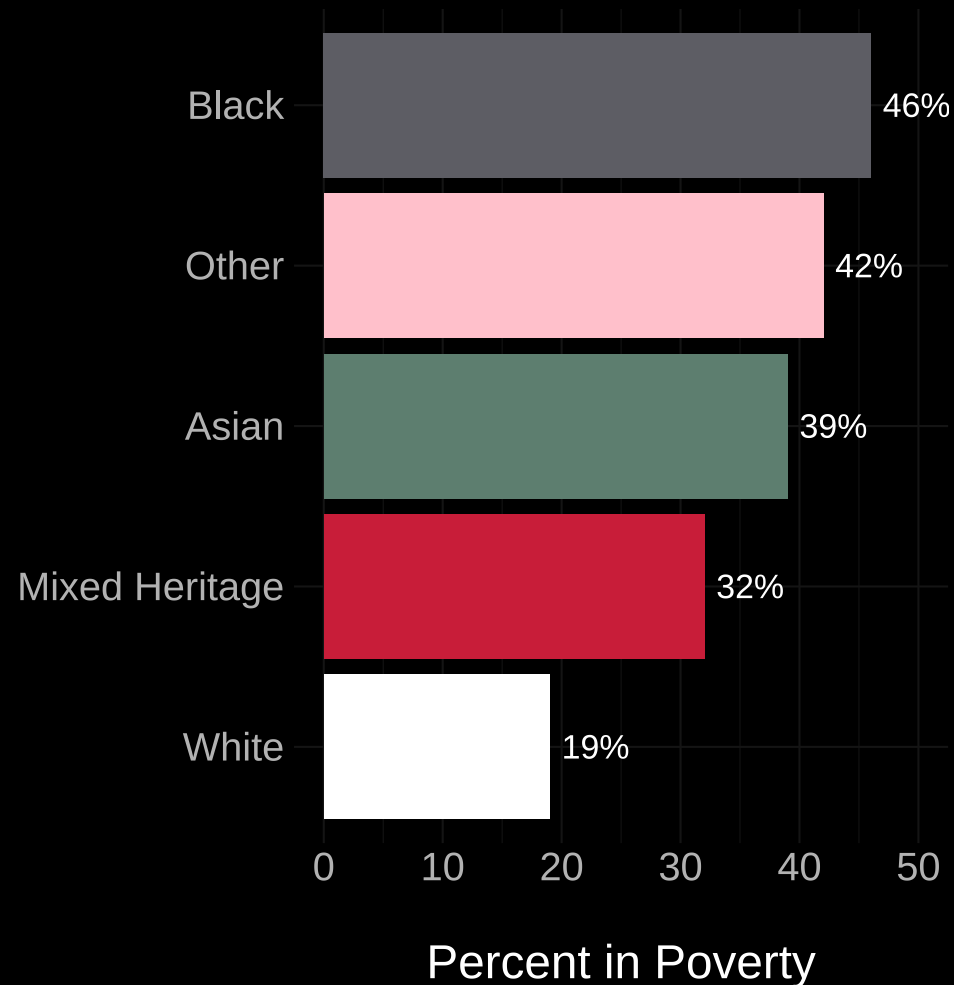
# Cuts Both Ways: Ethnicity & Deprivation in Child Welfare Interventions

Dr. Calum Webb

12th May 2021 | The University of Sheffield

Children in the poorest 10 per cent of neighbourhoods are more than 10 times as likely to be living in care than children in the least poor 10 per cent of neighbourhoods.



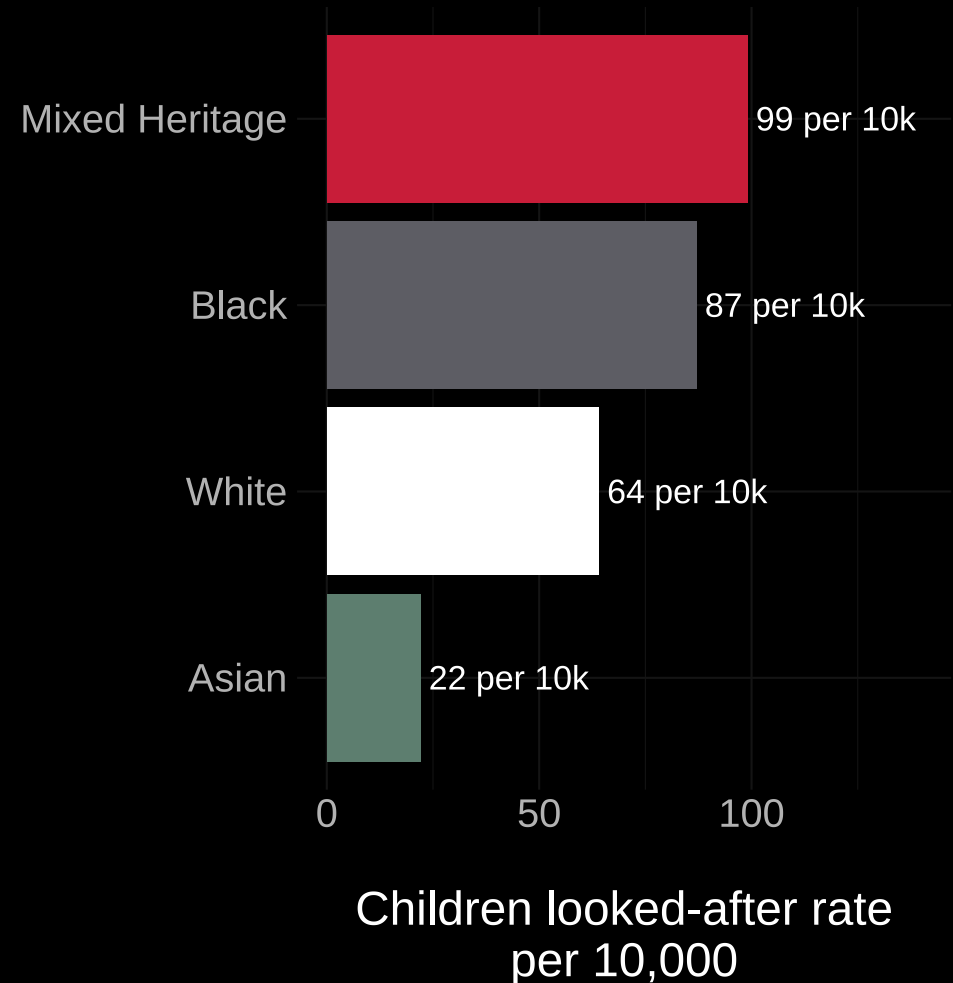


- People living in households where the 'head of household' is **Black (African, Caribbean, British or Other)** were just over **2.4 times more likely** to be living in poverty compared to people living in households where the 'head of household' is White.
- People in households headed by an **Asian** person were around **2 times more likely** to be living in poverty.
- People in households headed by a **Mixed Heritage person** were **1.7 times more likely** to be living in poverty. For '**Other**', the likelihood was **2.2 times higher**.

Source: Social Metrics Commission (2020).

When looking at looked-after rates by larger ethnic group:

- **Mixed Heritage** children are around **1.55 times more likely** to be living in care away from their birth family.
- **Black** children are around **1.36 times more likely** to be looked-after.
- And **Asian** children are about **2.9 times less likely** to be looked-after.
- We see very similar patterns across the world, including **higher rates of care among indigenous populations**, in New Zealand (Keddell, 2019); the United States (Kim & Drake, 2018); Canada (Lavergne, et al. 2008); and Australia (Tilbury, 2015).



Source: Bywaters, et al. (2019).

# Explaining away?

A common response to these two pieces of evidence is that **ethnic inequalities** (associated with race and racism) and **socioeconomic inequalities** (associated with poverty and class) **are the same thing**, and could therefore be tackled under policy and practice changes that tackle one or the other. Is this true?

# The Social Gradient

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# The Social Gradient

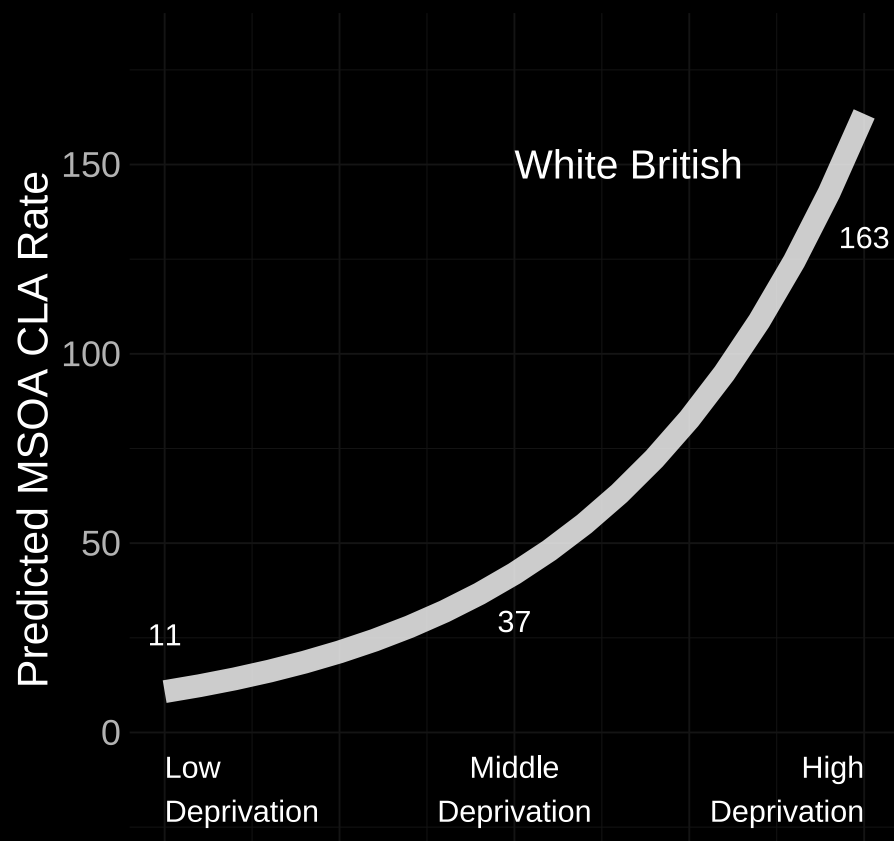
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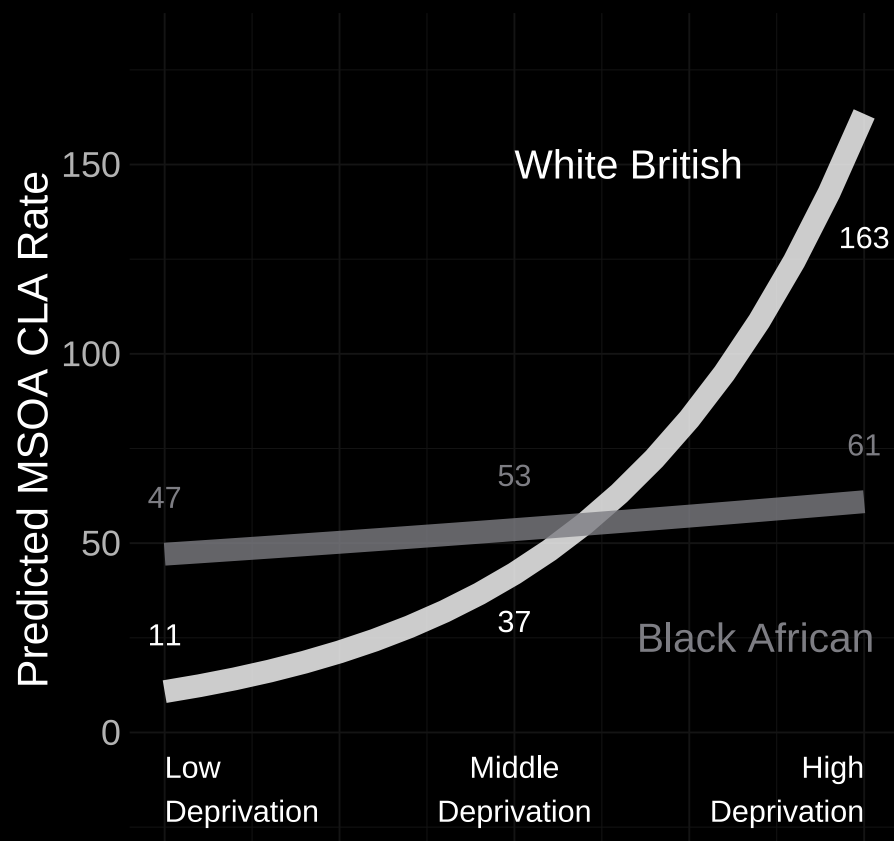
# The Social Gradient

# The Social Gradient by Ethnic Population



The social gradient for the **White British** MSOA child populations in the representative CWIP sample was **around 3.9** - much larger than the social gradient for the entire population on average.

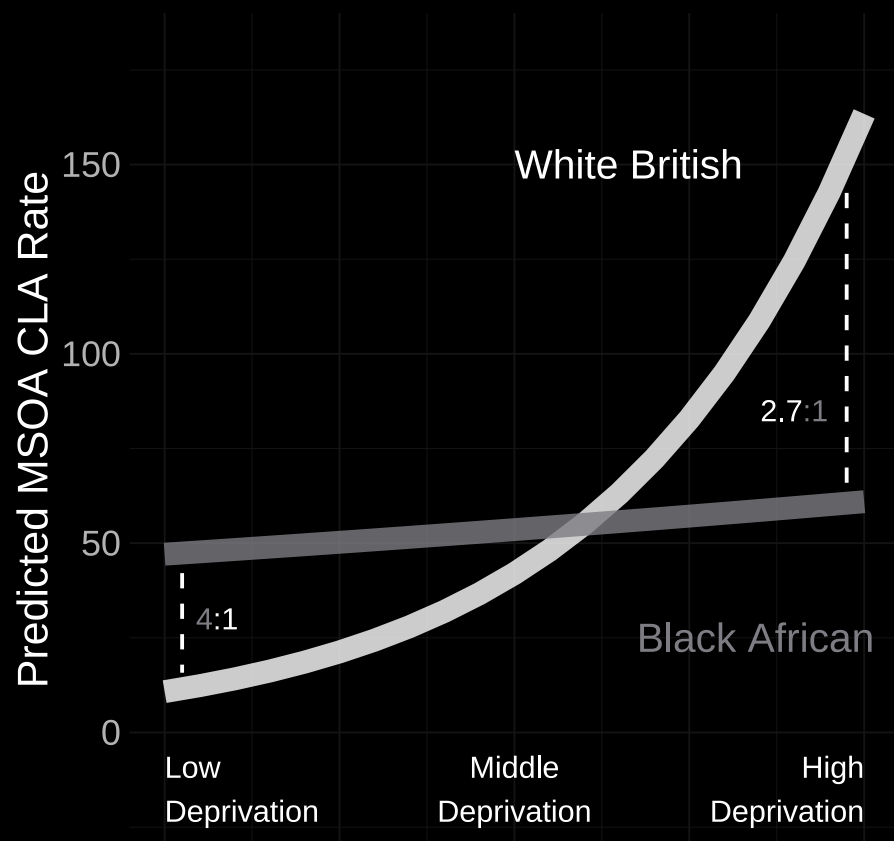
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By contrast, the social gradient for the **Black African** MSOA child populations was **around 1.14**, which was not statistically significant. This means that the **intervention rates did not differ significantly as deprivation increased**.

# The Social Gradient by Ethnic Population



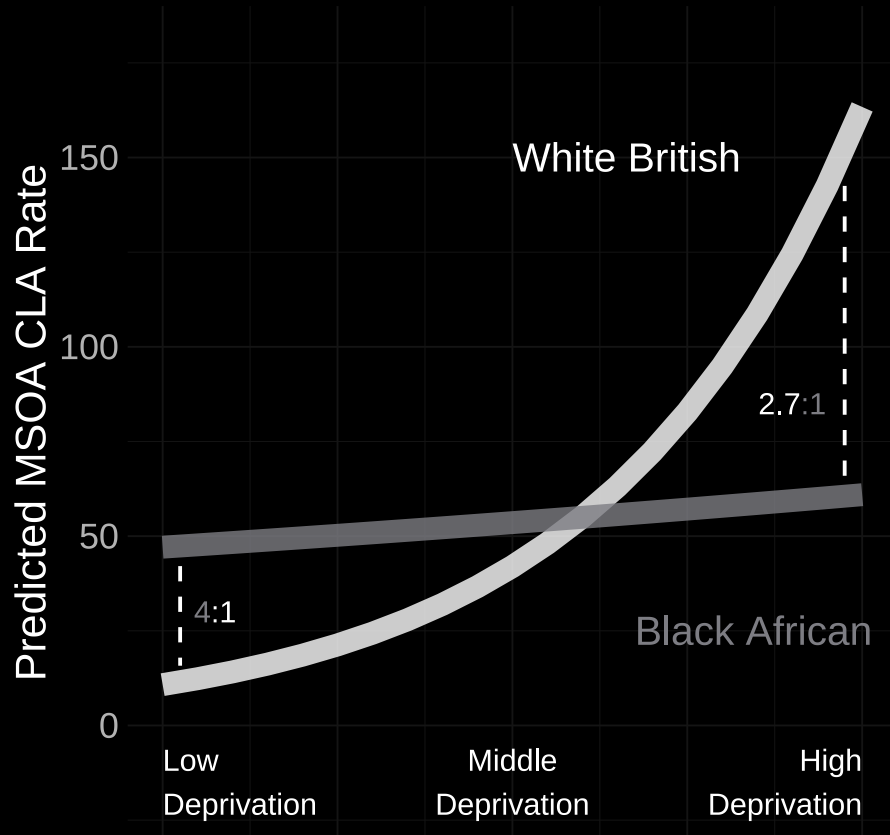
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In **low deprivation** MSOAs, **Black African** children's care rates outnumber **White British** children's by **4 to 1**. In **high deprivation** MSOAs, **White British** children's care rates outnumber **Black African** children's care rates by nearly **3 to 1**.

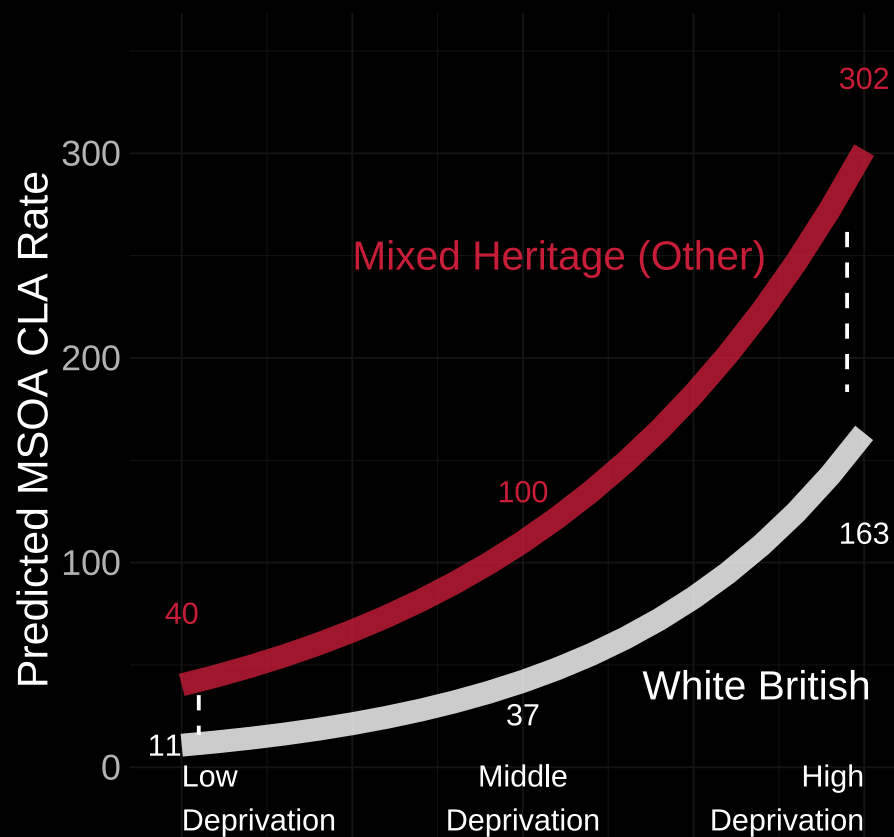


# The Social Gradient by Ethnic Population



This is why we describe the the **intersection of deprivation and ethnicity**, or race and class, as an intersection that **cuts both ways** (Newitz & Wray, 1996).

# The Social Gradient by Ethnic Population



The last slide I want to show in this level of granularity is about the 'Mixed Heritage (Other)' child population.

Across the spectrum of deprivation, the 'Mixed Heritage (Other)' population has significantly higher rates of being in care, and a significant social gradient. They face the sharp end of the racial inequalities and socioeconomic inequalities we see in child welfare interventions.

Mixed Heritage people are the fastest growing ethnic population in the UK. Yet our analyses rarely consider the inequalities they face - they are often excluded from analyses because the category is so broad.

# Social Gradients in CLA rates for 11 English Ethnic Groups

Ethnic Group	Social Gradient	Significant?	Sig. Diff to W.B.
White British	3.89	Yes	-
Asian Bangladeshi	1.01	No	Yes
Asian Indian	1.13	No	Yes
Asian Pakistani	2.22	Yes	No
Black African	1.14	No	Yes
Black Caribbean	1.88	Yes	Yes
Black Other	0.96	No	Yes
Mixed Other	2.74	Yes	No
Mixed White & Asian	3.00	Yes	No
Mixed White & Black African	1.63	No	Yes
Mixed White & Black Caribbean	2.08	Yes	Yes

# Ethnic Disproportionality in CLA rates by Deprivation

Ethnic Group	Low Deprivation	Mid. Deprivation	High Deprivation
White British	1.00	1.00	1.00
Asian Bangladeshi	2.30	0.67	0.17
Asian Indian	0.44	0.13	0.04
Asian Pakistani	0.54	0.33	0.18
Black African	3.98	1.28	0.37
Black Caribbean	3.35	1.91	0.84
Black Other	3.81	1.13	0.27
M. Heritage Other	3.41	2.62	1.74
White & Asian	1.26	1.03	0.76
White & B. African	2.07	0.99	0.40
White & B. Caribbean	2.49	1.44	0.74

What would the ethnic profile of 220 children looked-after look like in a low, average, and high deprivation neighbourhood if all neighbourhoods had identical population sizes? [Colour-blind friendly version here.](#)

# Consequences for Policy and Practice

- Failing to develop the infrastructure to identify and act on intersectional inequalities risks exacerbating ethnic and socioeconomic inequalities.
- The data required to conduct intersectional analyses is poor, largely because it precludes individual-level models. Introducing more complex intersections is likely to change our understanding of child welfare inequalities further.
- We need a better understanding of the mechanisms of intersectional child welfare inequalities by thinking about systemic issues outside of social work, including: culture; law; education; policing; early help; health; medicine.

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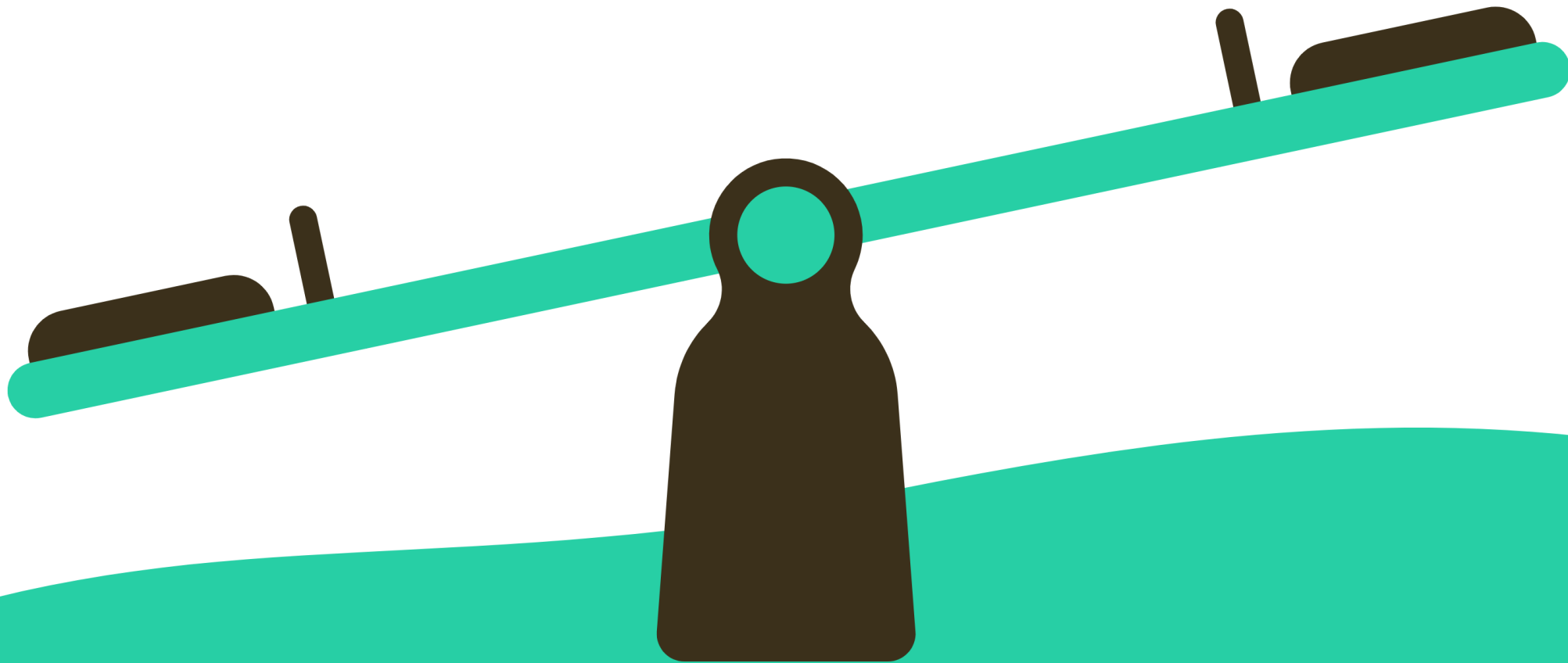
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