香港中文大學
The Chinese University of Hong Kong

Faculty of Education
CUHK 中大教育

EdPsy
Department of Educational Psychology

Departmental Seminar

Neurodiversity-affirming education: Time for translating principles into practice

Date 23 November 2026 (Monday)

Time 10:00 am – 11:30 am

Venue Room B5, Ho Tim Building, CUHK

Language English



Dr. Alyssa ALCORN

School of Psychology and Neuroscience
University of Bristol, UK

Abstract

In inclusive education, the concepts of "neurodiversity-affirming education" or "neurodiversity-affirming practice" seem to suddenly be everywhere. Right now, these terms are often aspirational: they capture shared goals for better supporting a diverse population of learners, rather than literally describing specific practices. They do not have universally accepted definitions. Different authors often overlap on major principles, but not on the details. Which supports or programmes "count" as affirming? What should we do? Researchers and practitioners both have a role to play at this transition point where principles are translated into practice and tested in the real world.

In this talk, I will give some brief background on the neurodiversity paradigm and its key ideas, and review how some existing authors have approached the idea of neurodiversity-affirming education. Where is the agreement so far? I will suggest that the neurodiversity paradigm and the meaning of "affirmation" itself point us to important principles, and suggest specific actions to take. Finally, I will share the example of two UK educational projects (Learning About Neurodiversity at School [LEANS] and Belonging in School) that both engage with concepts of neurodiversity-affirming practice in different ways.

About the Speaker

Dr. Alyssa M. Alcorn is an applied psychology researcher and lecturer at the School of Psychology and Neuroscience, University of Bristol, UK. Her work focuses on the neurodiversity paradigm, inclusive education, and participatory research methods. She is particularly interested in school-based interventions, and the role of knowledge, attitudes, and stigma in educational practice. Alyssa is also interested more broadly in promoting community involvement in academic research, and supporting colleagues to use participatory methods.

Online Registration

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Registration Deadline:
19 November 2026

Enquiries | (852) 3943 6213 | edpsy@cuhk.edu.hk | https://www.fed.cuhk.edu.hk/ep