Restorative Practices at Pacific Lutheran College

**We aim to:**

- Educate students towards self-directed right behavior.
- Promote, nurture and protect healthy relationships among members of the community, and
- Enable students to be accountable for the real consequences of any wrongdoing.

The fundamental aim of our philosophy and practice is for students to learn to be responsible for themselves and their actions and to make genuine, positive contributions to their community. A restorative approach sees conflict or wrongdoing as an opportunity for students to learn about the consequences of their actions, to develop empathy with others and to seek to make amends in such a way as to strengthen the community bonds that may have been damaged.

**We do this by:**

- Having high expectations and insisting upon high standards of behavior, and
- Providing high levels of support and care for individuals.

Valuing both a strong sense of community and behaviour based on sound moral principles, Pacific has high expectations of all its community members. Students are called to high standards of personal behaviour and are challenged when these expectations are not met. They are challenged, however, in a way that respects them as individuals made in the image and likeness of God, to enable them to correct their behaviour and to make amends to those affected. Through developing empathy for others, students learn to become more positive, supportive and contributing members of their community.

**Being 'firm, but fair' involves...**

- Clearly articulating and reinforcing expectations,
- Adhering to fair process in dealing with all cases of conflict and wrong-doing, and
- Recognising that wrongdoing primarily causes harm to relationships, and that this harm must be repaired in order to move forward.

At the heart of the Restorative Practices philosophy is an understanding of the social discipline window, which depicts the possible ways in which teachers (or parents) could respond to undesirable behaviours in young people.
In a primarily punitive response, the wrongdoer is held to high standards, but without the support necessary for him to reach them. Such a response can be alienating and stigmatising. It can also fail to effect any real change in behaviour.

In a more permissive response, the wrongdoer may find the support he needs without being held to account for his actions.

It is the aim of the restorative approach to be operating in the top right pane of the window - holding students to high standards of behaviour while at the same time providing the support and encouragement necessary for them to meet these expectations. The restorative approach emphasises working with students to educate them to right behaviour.

In this way, a restorative approach is perceived as being authoritative, rather than authoritarian. An authoritative approach holds tenaciously to the community values and challenges members to demonstrate these values in all their interactions with others.