Quiet a boon for teachers, students

By Christine Chow

YESTERDAY was a quiet day for students at Chan Shu Kui Memorial School, and they loved it.

It was the first time in the Kowloon Tong school's 25-year history that lessons had not been disrupted by the noise of aircraft overhead.

Students found it easier to concentrate and teachers said it was easier to keep classes going smoothly.

"Today I can concentrate better during lessons. The 1 1/2-hour lesson seems to be shorter since the class isn't distracted by the planes," said Secondary Four student Yiu Chan-yu.

Chan-yu said the noise from the planes had been even worse on rainy days when the planes flew low.

With no air-conditioners to drown out the noise, each lesson was disrupted at least twice. Teachers had to stop and wait till the planes passed.

"I can fully manipulate the pace of the lesson now," said mathematics teacher Tam Po-kwan. "There are no more disruptions."

Before Kai Tak's closure, she frequently had to repeat teaching points to students distracted by the noise.

"Sometimes I even had to give them a break to digest the contents and concentrate again," she said.

Miss Tam said the lack of noise would also improve the school's image.

Teachers say they adapted to the noise because they had no choice.

Vice-principal Chiu Cheung-ki, who has taught at Chan Shu Kui for 15 years, said: "I would say that I didn't notice the noise after the first two months' teaching."

"A quieter learning environment is undoubtedly better."

The noise did, however, have one positive aspect.

"It was just like an alarm that woke me up from dozing and daydreaming," Chan-yu said.

The sound of silence: Students enjoy the lack of interruptions to class caused by the roar of overhead planes.

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