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## 100 students stage boycott

About 100 students of the Chan Wai Chow Memorial College in Wanchai boycotted classes yesterday to protest against the "improper attitude" of some staff members.

Trouble erupted at the educational private school yesterday morning when students going to classes found that school staff posted at the college entrance were carrying out individual spot checks on uniforms.

The students claimed that the attitude of the staff, led by the vice-principal, Mr Lam Kwok-ming, was less than proper.

They refused to be inspected and congregated outside the gate.

At one point more than 100 students were gathered outside the school and the situation threatened to turn nasty.

Five officers from the Education Department rushed to the school after receiving a complaint.

They managed to persuade the angry students to enter the school more than two hours after the incident began.

Even after entering the school, 100 mainly form four students refused to enter the classroom and staged a noisy protest in the school's playground.

The students claimed that while carrying out his check Mr Lam had slapped one of the boys and it was "deplorable" that male staff should

inspect the uniforms of the girls.

The school authorities have denied both these charges.

The disgruntled students nominated 24 representatives to air their grievances to the school management in the presence of the Education Department staff.

They demanded that the rules regarding school uniforms and length of hair be relaxed and they also wanted a student union to be set up.

After lengthy discussions the school management agreed that a reasonable period will be given to students to enable them to obtain proper uniforms.

It will also do everything possible to acquaint students with the school regulations.

The other 900 students in the school returned to classes but lessons were disrupted for some time.

A spokesman for the Education Department later said the dispute has been "amicably resolved."

He added that education officers will be keeping a very close watch on the school today.

Sources said the school was concerned about the poor discipline of its students and yesterday morning's stringent check on school uniforms was an initial step to enforce stricter discipline and respect for school regulations.

Teachers who accompanied a group of students to an

(Cont'd on Page 18 Col 6)

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(Cont'd from Page 1)

event in the Schools Speech Festival on Monday reported that the students had been very badly behaved and rowdy in the recital hall as well as on their way back to the school.

They were unable to control the students and as a result 27 of them were punished by being made to stand in class for over an hour.

Mr Lam strongly refuted allegations that the staff had behaved improperly during yesterday's uniform check.

He denied having slapped any students and stressed that inspection of the girls' uniforms were carried out by female members of the staff.

A statement issued by the school last night said that reports in some newspapers were incorrect about the rea-

son why students did not attend class.

The statement said that the cause was that some 100 students had refused to allow teachers to check their uniforms on Tuesday morning before attending their classes.

The statement said only about 100 students had refused to attend classes and that checking of school uniforms was not unusual as the school had insisted students wear white underclothes to prevent colours showing through their white uniforms.

The statement also urged the students not to listen to rumours and to concentrate on their studies.

There should not be any miscommunication between teachers and students and any problems could be discussed between them, it said.