



Mentally prepared: Toogoolawa School students get ready for the rigours of the day ahead

Schooled in meditation

By MIAWLING LAM

AS any teacher would tell you, silence is rare at an all-boys school. But in six sessions a day, pupils of the small, independent Toogoolawa School at Wickham near Newcastle cut their chatter short to meditate. They kick off the morning with a 15-minute closed-eye session, collect themselves again before and after each meal and meditate for

another 15 minutes in the afternoon before heading home. School principal Neil Wales said the meditation settled students and mentally prepared them for the learning ahead. "The whole idea is to get the boys to train their minds to be more peaceful so they can remove feelings of anger, frustration and fear," he said. "When they first start, it's so hard

to get them to sit still for 30 seconds, but over time they settle into it." Mr Wales said the sessions were particularly beneficial given the school's unique enrolment policy. With core values of love, peace, truth, right conduct and non-violence, the school caters to teenagers in Years 7 and 8, accepting pupils expelled or suspended from the mainstream system and helping to get them back on track.