Students at Darwin High School will have earthquake recordings at their fingertips after measuring equipment was installed at the school today.

“The timing couldn’t have been more opportune given that a shake was felt in the Territory yesterday, drawing our attention to earthquakes,” Minister for Education, Peter Chandler, said.

The magnitude 6.3 earthquake was centred in the Banda Sea, north of Australia.

“The seismometer installed at Darwin High School will allow students to map seismic events in the Pacific region. The school’s readings will be part of an international data bank accessible to scientists around the world.

“The seismometer is part of the Australian Seismometers in Schools Program (AuSIS), one of many innovative programs introduced by the Howard Government to educate our young people. Seismometers are being installed in 40 to 45 high schools across Australia.

“Being able to record a quake that happens in another country is exciting and will spark curiosity about studies and research into the earth. No doubt the ability to study quakes at school will inspire some students to pursue geoscience as a profession.

“The Territory Government applauds the Howard Government for having the foresight to provide real-time monitoring of the Australian continent in schools and raise awareness of earth science.”

Dr Natalie Balfour, from the Research School of Earth Sciences at the Australian National University in Canberra, installed the seismometer.

“It’s great to be able to provide this technology for the schools because I have seen the difference it makes to the students when they can get firsthand experience of momentous events like earthquakes. It is exciting for me because I know how having a spark like this can ignite a whole future for some of these kids.”

A seismometer has been installed at Katherine High School and another will be put in place at Nhulunbuy High School on Thursday.

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