The Territory Government, in conjunction with the Catholic Education Office (CEO) and Thamarrurr Community Council, is moving quickly to ensure Our Lady of the Sacred Heart School at Wadeye has enough resources to accommodate a rise in student enrolments this year, Employment, Education and Training Minister Syd Stirling said today.

“There are currently 570 students enrolled at the school, up from 430 last year,” Mr Stirling said.

“This increase in enrolments is largely due to the efforts of the local community and they, along with the school, should be congratulated for the initiative they have shown in getting more children to school.

“The Government is working closely with the school, the community and the Catholic Education Office to accommodate the rise in enrolments.

“Staff from the CEO – which administers the school – and the Department of Employment, Education and Training (DEET) visited Wadeye yesterday to assess the situation and develop a plan of action to support the increase in enrolments.

“Actions to be taken include:
- cleaning and restructuring the library to accommodate a boys’ class if agreed to by the school;
- finding two additional transportable classrooms, to be funded by DEET;
- DEET to provide funds to CEO for 30 new desks. CEO are also supplying 40 desks and chairs which should be on site this week;
- DEET to provide funds for an extra three teachers at the school. Teacher numbers will continue to be monitored;
- improving toilet facilities; and
- reviewing staff housing arrangements.

“The Territory Government is committed to ensuring Territory students are able to access a quality education, no matter where they live,” Mr Stirling said.

“DEET, CEO, the school and the community have acted quickly to address the situation at Wadeye to ensure that those students currently attending school continue to do so and are fully supported.

“Increasing school enrolments in a remote community like Wadeye is a good problem to have and the Territory Government is pleased to be part of the solution.

“We would urge other remote communities to follow Thamarrurr community’s lead in getting their children into classrooms so we can work in partnership to keep the Territory moving ahead.”

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