Education Minister Marion Scrymgour today inspected a classroom that’s about to be shipped to Arnhem Land under the Northern Territory Government’s Closing the Gap package to address Indigenous disadvantage.

Speaking at Perkins Shipyard, Ms Scrymgour said the classroom was one of 15 committed by the Territory Government under the $70 million education component of Closing the Gap, with 11 already in use.

“We recognise more work needs to be done to address Indigenous disadvantage in education – providing more facilities is part of this Government’s commitment,” Ms Scrymgour said.

“We are also upgrading facilities, signing partnership agreements to improve attendance and teaching accelerated literacy programs.

“In addition, we are working with the Commonwealth to implement measures under the Intervention – including the recruitment this year of the first 50 of an extra 200 teachers for remote schools.”

Eleven of the fifteen new classrooms are onsite and being used by students, including two at Ramingining and Ngukurr and one each at: Woolianna, Epenarra, Canteen Creek, Amengemterneah (Clinic), Mt Liebig, Wallace Rockhole, Engawala (Alcoota).

Warruwi’s new classroom is awaiting a handover inspection before use this term. The two remaining classrooms are in Berrimah awaiting delivery by road to Palumpa and Wudapuli as soon as the Port Keats Road opens to heavy traffic.

The 12x6 unit at Perkins Shipyard in Darwin will be delivered by barge to Milingimbi School. The modular units consist of a classroom with a verandah and internal and external wet areas.

Ms Scrymgour said 85% of Indigenous children in remote areas had some sort of hearing loss.

“Acoustic finishes in the units will help reduce classroom noise and maximise learning,” she said.

The modular classrooms have been constructed by five Northern Territory companies (Demountable Sales and Hire, Fleetwood Darwin, Fleetwood Alice Springs, Murray River North and Spunbrood) who have done a fantastic job under tight timeframes.

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Moving the Territory Ahead