Queensland turned on the sun for the official launch of Australia's first off-grid, solar and battery powered classroom - the Hivve at Bracken Ridge State High School in Brisbane.

Principal Roger Atkins was recently able to showcase the new classroom to visitors, including Energy Minister, The Hon Angus Taylor.

"We are delighted to officially launch this world-leading classroom technology which has already delivered clear education benefits both through cooling the classroom in an environmentally sustainable way and creating an optimal learning environment in the classroom through Hivve's proprietary technology," Atkins said.

The Hivve classroom at Bracken Ridge has been 100% self-powered since commissioning in June 2018, with no grid connection or back-up. Its rooftop solar PV system works alongside a Tesla Powerwall 2 battery, which provides 13.5kWh of energy storage.

"It's clearly possible to have completely off-grid schools," said Hivve Executive Director, David Wrench, "and we've demonstrated that quite consistently, with robust trial results from the three schools operating with Hivve classrooms." At the beginning of 2018 Hivve established a successful partnership with ARENA to trial its solar-powered state of the art learning spaces.

"The Hivve classroom concept has the potential to be a game-changer by relegating hot, overcrowded and energy-intensive classrooms to the history books," said Wrench. "Hivve is a completely sustainable solution, powering all its own infrastructure, including air conditioning, while also feeding energy back into the school to run other classrooms."

ARENA CEO Darren Miller said the successful Hivve trials in NSW and now Queensland opens the door for more Australian schools to switch to renewable energy.

"Many schools on the eastern seaboard are currently at capacity on grid connection. This Australian-developed solution could help schools reduce costs and emissions, while also reducing reliance and demand on the grid," he said.

Energy Minister Angus Taylor also emphasised the benefits for schools in avoiding the significant upfront cost of grid connection, while also saving on on-going energy costs.

He could also see the potential for applying the Hivve technology in other locations, such as rural areas.

The Hivve at Bracken Ridge has been powering right through winter," said Richard Doyle, Director of Hivve Technology. "It shows the benefits of combining renewable energy and storage to ensure energy is available when needed, not just when the sun is out. And Hivve's smart technology also gives students and teachers real-time access to its

living systems, making it easy for teachers to optimise the classroom environment year-round."

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