

## Brethren schools collect \$800k

Jim Campbell

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DARLING DOWNS schools run by the Exclusive Brethren received more than \$800,000 funding from the Queensland Government last year.

The Brethren's Agnew School has campuses in Toowoomba and Warwick which last year received capital assistance grants totalling \$468,488 and \$369,238 respectively.

The funding came to light after New South Wales Greens MP John Kaye raised concerns that government money was going to schools not open to the general public.

A spokesman for the Agnew School's Toowoomba campus said there were 22 students enrolled at the Toowoomba campus and about 17 enrolled at Warwick.

He said the capital assistance grant for the Toowoomba campus was being used to build a new primary school.

Prior to last year's Federal election, Kevin Rudd expressed concerns about the Exclusive Brethren's education practices.

"My position on the Exclusive Brethren is on the record. I believe this is an extremist cult and sect. I also believe that it breaks up families," he said.

"I also believe that there are real problems with the provision of modern education for kids under their system; whether, for example, not giving access to the full range of information technology assistance."

A spokesman said Mr Rudd made those comments prior to being elected Prime Minister and therefore it was unfair to bring them up today.

While the school spokesman said people in the wider community were "welcome to apply for enrolment," Dr Kaye said children enrolled at Exclusive Brethren schools must be members of the Brethren community.

The spokesman said the Agnew School complied "100 per cent" with the requirements of the Queensland Studies Authority for both primary and secondary education.



Prime Minister Mr Kevin Rudd  
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