

KEYBOARD STUDIES PROGRAMME TACKLES UNDERFUNDING IN MUSIC EDUCATION WITH MELODICA

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This unlikely starter instrument provides a low-cost, low-maintenance option at a time where music provision in schools is suffering



The **National Keyboard Studies Programme**, has announced an initiative offering UK school children the chance to learn the melodica. The programme aims to use this inexpensive, low-maintenance instrument to help provide low-cost music education at a time when music provision in schools is suffering.

The hand-held keyboard instrument is powered by air blown through the mouthpiece and can be used to teach a broad range of repertoire. The programme offers students progression from the melodica to the accordion, piano and then the organ, with the hope that the students involved can build a wide range of skills, musical and beyond.

Christopher Potts, music programme manager for the **Hamish Ogston Foundation** which supports the scheme, said: 'That all-important first instance of musical ignition might now happen at a classroom desk with a melodica poised on top ready for deployment. The end goal could be at the console of one of the UK's finest organs or behind a mighty Steinway Model D in a major concert hall.'

Initially established by the Diocese of Leeds, the Keyboard Studies Programme currently reaches 830 pupils within the whole-class programme and 150 individual lessons are being given to students who have gone on to study the accordion, piano and organ.

There are now plans for the expansion of the programme alongside the current roll out of the National Schools Singing Programme - another musical initiative supported by The Hamish Ogston Foundation. In dioceses where the singing programme has been successfully established, a second fund will be available to start up a concurrent Keyboard Studies Programme.

You can find out more about the National Keyboard Studies Programme **here**.