Which Drum-Kit?

Whatever you do, it's going to be noisy! There are three main options: practice pads; electronic kit; acoustic kit.

Practice Pads. These come in a range of prices and styles. The most basic ones are roll-up and they make a basic sound. They are more a toy than a musical instrument, but they may well suffice is space is a real issue, or if a child is uncertain as to whether s/he wants to play long-term. They are cheap (starting from about £30) but before long your child will not be able to do the exercises set by the tutor.

Example: Amazon search "Practice drum pads" - £31

Electronic Kit. These are pretty nearly as good as the real thing (although the experience of striking a pad with a stick is not exactly the same as if it were a real drum). The lay-out is similar to a real drum-kit, so children can easily learn on one and practise effectively on the other. The sound quality is excellent, but you should be warned that they are not totally silent: the player wears headphones, but there is still a good degree of noise produced by the sticks hitting the pads. You can pay a huge amount for one of these, but a good basic starter kit should cost in the region of £200 (although I've seen them from as low as £140).

Example: Amazon search "Electronic drum kit" - £230 + delivery

'Acoustic' Drum Kit These are the real thing and can cost as much money as you have. I suggest you don't get a junior starter kit, but go for a full-size one. Don't be tempted by lots of extra drums: a standard one with bass, snare, toms (2 on the bass drum and one on the floor), along with crash cymbal and hi-hat is all you need. They are noisy though. If you have an attic or a large garden shed, or understanding neighbours, then this is the best option. You should aim to spend upwards of £200, and a further small investment of sound-off pads (£35-ish) will reduce the noise level by about 50%.

Example: Amazon search "Drum kit" - £199 + delivery

PLEASE NOTE: These suggestions have been made by a non-drummer, and should be treated as such.