



Getting Children Moving
diddi dance® in your EYFS setting

All you need to know



diddi dance, 33 Kingsdale Road, London SE18 2DD
Tel : 07973 982790 Email : info@diddidance.com

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Who we are and what we do

At **diddi dance** we have made it our mission to enhance children's endless enthusiasm through funky, full of fun sessions that build confidence, co-ordination and creativity.

Our programme has been designed to complement and enhance the Early Years Foundation Stage framework and incorporates every learning area into our classes. Each section of the class has been cleverly aligned with not only the 7 learning areas but also corresponds to the development requirements as set out in the DoE Early Years Outcomes and OFSTED's School Readiness report 2014. We have successfully implemented our programme in Nurseries, schools and children's centres since its development sixteen years ago by diddi dance founder Anne-Marie Martin, a professional dancer and teacher.

diddi dance offers a unique 45-minute class that easily fits into your EYFS setting. We engage and inspire the children's own creativity by using action songs, dancing games, fun exercises, hoops and dance ribbons to our own funky pop songs.

We change themes every half term exploring styles such as Salsa, Country, Bollywood, Reggae, Hip Hop and Jive catering for all tastes. Classes follow a structured plan yet are taught in a relaxed atmosphere where children can learn at their own pace as their confidence builds.

Our classes are ideally suited for both boys and girls between 2 and 5 years old, although we have had children as young as 16 months enjoy and achieve in our sessions.

Why should I have dance in my setting?

With Ofsted now stating the importance of physical activity, they are actively wanting to see children out of breath in early years settings on their visits. Chief medical officers recommendations state children of preschool age who are capable of walking unaided should be physically active daily for at least 180 minutes (3 hours) spread throughout the day. It can be hard for practitioners with all their day to day responsibilities to keep up with this so having an energetic, full of fun specialist do a session for them can be valuable in a setting.

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Dancing for the under 5's is not only a great way of keeping fit and active, but it's also great fun! Our sessions are gender neutral and use our own original music, our fully trained, experienced session leaders are full of energy and children are engaged when seeing them. Getting 18m-5 year olds active is really important so what better way to do this than 45 minutes of jumping, turning, galloping, moving and shaking?

The vestibular system is primarily responsible for balance whose task is to facilitate orientation and postural behaviour which enables the body to function in gravity and in space. Balance is not something we automatically have it must be learned. It is fundamental to everything we do, such as walking without falling over, riding a bike.

Movements that we include in our lessons that stimulate the vestibular system:

- Spinning
- Turning movements
- Rolling
- Swinging
- See-saw – two children holding hands rocking backwards and forwards
- Tummy time – crawling on the tummy helps to coordinate patterns of movement
- Crawling on hands and knees combining the use of balance, touch, proprioception and vision

Proprioceptors are found in the muscles and joints and are activated by bodily movement, letting us know where each part of our body is in relation to the rest, how it is moving, and where our bodies are in space (Hannaford, 1995). If this system is working well then young children will thrive when physically active and will participate willingly in dance and movement.

Movements that we include in our lessons that stimulate the proprioceptive system include:

- Jumping
- Walking
- Tummy crawling along the floor
- Pulling on material such a stretchy material or parachutes
- Weight bearing on hands and arms

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Symptoms of poor proprioception include:

- Poor posture
- Constant fidgeting
- Desire to be held
- May provoke fights to get sensory input
- Visual problems
- Lack awareness of where parts of the body are in space

Children today are moving less as a consequence of cultural changes leading to more sedentary behaviour rather than experiencing the joy of physical activity. Movement is the key to learning. In the critical early years of brain development young children should move, dance and play, interacting with their peers.

Important aspects to our approach:

- Movement and dance is the young child's route to learning
- Enabling environments are key
- Raising self-esteem
- Involves social interaction
- Developmentally appropriate classes
- Builds on knowledge and skills
- We follow a lesson plan each week

- If we want children to reach their optimum in learning then they need to move. Physical foundations for learning, such as balance, posture and coordination, must be secured in the preschool years for young children to cope with the demands of a formal classroom such as the ability to sit still and concentrate, coordinate their hands and eyes when writing and control eye movements needed for reading. Learning is not all in the head, indeed movement is the starting point for children's learning.

- We need to ensure children are provided with an enabling environment in which they can learn from a variety of movement and dance experiences. We provide stimulating resources and rich learning opportunities through movement and dance.

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- Dance and movement classes that are positive and joyful as well as meaningful and challenging, helping children feel good about their participation, raising their self-esteem.
- Social interaction encourages brain development. Children learn best through collaboration and working with peers. Moving, dancing and playing with others breaks down boundaries between genders, cultures and learning styles. We use a variety of groupings throughout the class such as pairs, small and large groups creating a child centred learning environment.
- We consider the children's age and stage of development and abilities planning genuinely challenging but achievable activities.
- Our approach builds on knowledge and skills gained in previous sessions which helps children to learn more efficiently gaining confidence and competence over time.
- Lesson plans each week include a warm up, exploring different movements with a variety of materials, working large or small groups or in individually or in pairs, revising previously learned skills and developing new ones. Colling down at the end of the 45 minute lesson can take several forms.

With obesity rates in under 5's at their highest right now exercise is so important to avoid this continuing into later life.

25% of British children are overweight by the time they start Primary School.

11.2% of 4-5 yr olds are obese (2 stone overweight)

There is a 40-70% chance children will become obese adults

Exercise should be enjoyed. In the first few years of every child's life how they view exercise is instilled and their view will stay with them for life so we teach them that it can be great fun through dancing.

How do I organise a diddi dance session in my setting?

You can organise a FREE taster session for your setting to see how much your children can benefit from **diddi dance** by simply calling your local franchisee or check out the website on www.diddidance.com

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How diddi dance contributes to the EYFS learning areas

Prime areas of learning:

COMMUNICATION LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

- Children are expanding their dance and movement vocabulary through rhyme, singing and communication

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Develops relationships by working in friendly pairs
- Incorporates turn taking and sharing
- Encourages sense of self by engaging in free movement through dances and songs
- Fortifies independence through own selection and use of resources
- Improves confidence and self esteem through achievement
- Strengthens understanding of boundaries and behavior with children following instructions

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

- Learn to move with confidence, imagination and safety
- Supports development by using different methods of movement
- Improves gross & fine motor skills by using props such as ribbons
- Children negotiate and learn to adjust their direction developing awareness of space and care for others
- Promotes self awareness using songs and dances about body parts and body movements
- Children explore stylized moves for dance themes including learning to take direction

And to the 5 specific areas of learning:

EXPRESSIVE ART AND DESIGN

- Children learn a repertoire of songs and dances relating to the dance and movement they engage in during the sessions
- Encourages dance and movement in response to music and sound
- Promotes use of imagination using props and materials
- Incorporates freestyle dance to engage in free movement and interpretation of music

LITERACY

- Children are given time and encouragement to join in relevant rhymes and phrases introduced in each dance style
- Provides rhyming words in songs and rhythmic activities in dance
- Words and phrases are used to associate certain themed moves

MATHEMATICS

- Uses counting in phrases during many of our songs
- Children are encouraged to count to 3 before jumping into our hoop “puddles or pools” or hiding and shouting 1,2,3 BOO
- Supports the children’s awareness of size, shapes and space when using a variety of resources

UNDERSTANDING THE WORLD

- Children are introduced to unique counting songs in English, French and Spanish
- Dances are chosen to show different cultures around the world from Bollywood to Reggae and Salsa to Irish.

SCHOOL READINESS

- Uses our own songs to act out a variety of scenarios
- Encourages good listening skills, paying attention and responding to boundaries
- Promotes social interaction, taking turns and responding to instruction

Physical activity, movement and skills supports the following areas:

- Reduction in “sedentary” time
- Encourages safe risk taking
- Expression of ideas and feelings
- Skills requiring coordination
- Exploring what their bodies can do
- Cooperating with others

Gary Simpson, LEYF

Children who are physically active have improved psychological wellbeing. Children gain more self-confidence and have higher self-esteem

Meggitt, Kamen etal 2011

TESTIMONIALS

“diddi dance has made a real difference to our setting. The children have loved every session and parents have spoken about how enthusiastic they are at home. The children's listening and rhythmic skills have also improved greatly. The sessions have provided staff with new ideas and skills to develop their teaching. All the children are involved and engaged and even some of the children with low self esteem have grown in confidence after each session. We thoroughly recommend diddi dance in all settings.”

- Jo Proctor, Discovery Primary School

“We have been using diddi dance in Reception and Year One for four years. The teachers are vibrant and energetic and the children thrive on this! The lessons are well structured, pacy and fun. The children develop a wide range of skills stretching beyond those of dance with turn-taking and partner work, counting, even a bit of Spanish! We highly recommend diddi dance.”

- Lucy Wheatley, Windrush Primary School

“The children really enjoy the diddi dance sessions we have at our Family Fun Days. The diddi dance teachers are professional and friendly with the children and parents. They show an interest in the children they are working with; they engage, support and encourage children as they participate in the activities. Our children love using the props and instruments provided. They also learnt about colours, movement, directions, listening and instructions while playing and having fun.”

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- Patricia Reeves, Parent Outreach Worker at Bessemer Grange Children’s Centre

“I was so impressed with the quality and quantity of the dance activities. I was amazed at the toddlers counting not only in English but in French up to ten and how they engaged with the teacher.”

- Maggie Johnson – Community Researcher, Swindon Borough Council

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