

# Code of Conduct

## Statement of Intent

We love Scottish dancing and music. Every dancer, of every level of experience, should feel absolutely comfortable and safe at any of our events.

Harassment or bullying won't be tolerated and by attending any of our events in any capacity (whether you are a volunteer for the RSCDS Management Board or Committees, a well-known teacher, a musician or a first time dancer) you agree to treat all participants with care and respect and to abide by our code of conduct. We want every person to feel comfortable at any of our events and we hope that this document plays a role in fostering a safe and comfortable place to dance. We believe that we have one of the safest communities in the world but we don't know everyone and, in a world-wide community, like the RSCDS, it's helpful to have a clear shared understanding of our behaviour expectations. The code of conduct provides us all with that clarity.

## Code of Conduct

### 1. There's room for all of us on the dance floor

We welcome all dancers and music lovers regardless of gender/gender identity, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, religion or employment status. We encourage all dancers to explore dancing on either side of the dance (traditionally named Mens and Ladies sides). Each dancer's preference is left up to the individual. You may want to clarify with someone which role they would like to take when you ask them to dance as many dancers enjoy both sides and would be happy to dance on either.

### 2. Respect others

Be respectful, don't be inappropriate. Do not use sexist, homophobic, transphobic, ableist or racist language. Remember that **no** means **no**. We hope that this will be common sense to most of our dancers.

Unless someone specifically asks for feedback, don't correct people's dancing on the dance floor. In class, please leave giving feedback on an individual to the teacher.

### 3. Look out for each other and your community

Look out for each other. We are a big family and let's ensure we love every step we take while at the same time looking out for those around us. If you feel harassed or are made to feel uncomfortable, please contact the event organiser or safer spaces volunteer immediately. The person at the front door, any staff member or committee member will point you in the right direction. If you see someone who looks uncomfortable or upset, ask if they are ok and if they would like you to report any unwanted behaviour to the safer spaces volunteer on their behalf. If you harass someone, you may be asked to leave. You may also be banned from other events and the police may be notified at our discretion and as guided by the complainant.

### 4. Your personal boundaries are paramount

Always respect personal boundaries. Dancing can involve close contact with others and we must respect each others' personal space. If someone tells you that you are making them feel uncomfortable, respect their requirement for space.

## 5. You can say no.

If someone asks you to dance and you don't want to, you can say "no thank you" – you don't need to offer an explanation. You may then ask or say yes to someone else, if you want to.

## 6. Be ok with people saying no

If you ask someone to dance and they say no, respect their decision and ask someone else. No one is obliged to dance with you, and no one should feel obliged to accept a dance if they don't feel like it.

## 7. Dance Safe

Keep your eyes open on the dance floor and try not to bump into others around you. Extra spins and variations are great fun if everyone is familiar with them but should not be carried out in such a way as to prevent the participation and enjoyment of others. Remember your partner may have an injury that you're unaware of and even one extra turn might hurt them. If your partner is hurting you unintentionally please take care of yourself and let them know.

## 8. Safeguarding and Child Protection

Under UK law anyone under 18 is considered a child and any organisation offering activities for children must have a child protection/safeguarding policy.

The RSCDS strongly believes that children and young people should be encouraged to take part in Scottish Country Dancing and subscribes to the following principles:

- Children and young people have a right to enjoy sport, free from all forms of abuse, exploitation and poor practice.
- All children and young people have equal rights to protection from harm.
- All children and young people should be encouraged to fulfil their potential, and inequalities should be challenged.
- Everybody has a responsibility to support the care and protection of children.
- Sporting organisations have a duty of care to children and young people who take part in sport.

Under 18s are welcome to attend RSCDS events and to take part in our activities. There are two scenarios under which this is possible; Attending **without** their parent/guardian **or** attending **with** their parent/guardian

### Option 1: Under 18s without parents/guardians.

At some of our events/activities (e.g. Spring Fling, Junior Summer School) under 18s attend partially or fully without their parent/guardian. Each of these events has a full Child Protection Policy and Procedures in place. The details of our Child Protection Policy and Procedures can be found on [here our website](#).

As part of this Policy, at least one Event Child Wellbeing and Protection Officer will be identified. Should you see, hear or have any concerns regarding under 18s, please contact the Child Wellbeing and Protection Officer for the event or, if unavailable the RSCDS CWPO ([cwpo@rscds.org](mailto:cwpo@rscds.org)). The volunteers (Welcome desk, Refreshments etc) or any committee member will point you in the right direction.

### Option 2: Under 18s attend events/activities with their parent/guardian.

At some events under 18s may **only attend with** their parent/guardian (e.g. Autumn Gathering, Summer School). At these events the RSCDS is not responsible for their supervision while they are attending, competing, dancing or spectating.

Should any under 18s not be attending with their parent/guardian, but with a group (e.g. their branch, club etc), then that organisation is expected to have their own child protection policy and procedures, including parental permission and background checked, appropriately trained adults (responsible adult), in line with **Sport Scotland's Standards** for Child Wellbeing and Protection in Sport. The RSCDS website (link) contains our Standards and templates to support Branches with putting this into practice.

The parent/guardian/responsible adult is responsible for ensuring that any under 18 is appropriately supervised at all times. Please note that while attending class, performing, dancing etc themselves, a parent/guardian/responsible adult cannot be responsible for a child (unless that child is also a full participant). Please ensure you have made appropriate alternative supervision arrangements. For groups with under 18s not accompanied by parents/guardians, this will require having multiple approved responsible adults. For parents/guardians this could be an informal arrangement with a friend/other parent. Please ensure that all parties (child/young person; parent/guardian/lead responsible adult; and the new responsible adult) is aware who is responsible at any given time.

A note on private spaces (e.g. changing rooms): Please ensure that at no time are under 18s in a private space with other people without their parent/guardian or responsible adult. Responsible adults, please ensure you are never alone with the under 18s in your care.

A note on video/photography: Please avoid taking videos/photographs solely of under 18s unless you are their parent/guardian or have their parent/guardians' permission. Where photos/videos include under 18s (or persons you could reasonably assume to be under 18), please do not share these on social media/other public platforms without permission from the parent/guardian.

Should you see, hear or have any concerns regarding under 18s, please contact the Safer Spaces volunteer(s) for the event. The volunteers (Welcome desk, Refreshments etc) or any organising committee member will point you in the right direction.

## Getting Help

If you are injured and require medical attention or if you feel unsafe or threatened and would like to make the organisers aware of inappropriate behaviour, visit the event organiser or safer spaces volunteer.

If you would like to make a complaint or pursue a concern, please contact RSCDS Child Wellbeing and Protection Officer Katie Haig at [cwpo@rscds.org](mailto:cwpo@rscds.org). If you would rather speak to a male please contact Jon Berridge, COO of the RSCDS by email at [jon.berridge@rscds.org](mailto:jon.berridge@rscds.org) or by phone on 0131 2201656. If the CWPO or COO considers the situation to be more serious than their experience can deal with, the RSCDS will take appropriate action to refer the issue to appropriate professionals and act on their guidance.

## Sexual Harassment

The Equality Act of 2010 outlines the definition of sexual harassment under UK law.

We strongly encourage anyone who has experienced any sexual harassment to report it to the police. The official advice in Scotland is to dial 999 for an emergency and 101 for non-emergencies. You can also report a crime online at any time via Police Scotland's website (scroll down for Online Reporting Forms) and it can be at any time after the offence has happened.

If you would like impartial advice, we recommend contacting an organisation such as one of the below:

- [Rape Crisis Scotland](#) Call 08088 01 03 02
- [Scottish Women's Aid](#) Call 0800 027 1234
- [White Ribbon](#) Call 0808 2000 247
- ASSIST is continuing to provide a service to women and men and children. You can contact ASSIST on 0141 276 7710 or [assist@no-smtp.glasgow.gov.uk](mailto:assist@no-smtp.glasgow.gov.uk)

## Thank You

Thanks for reading this far, it shows us that you take these issues seriously. Our Safeguarding Sub-group and Management Board have spent a long time discussing these issues as a team and it's a continual learning curve for us. We will happily listen to any suggestions you have so we can continually improve and monitor this part of our community. We love our RSCDS family and nothing is more important to us than ensuring our dancers and musicians feel safe and can love their music and dancing and the community of incredible people.

To learn more, check out [safer spaces pages here](#) on our website.

RSCDS HQ

*Adapted with permission from and thanks to Swing Patrol London.*