



## **Statement of Intent**

We love Irish dancing. Every dancer, of every level of experience, should feel absolutely comfortable and safe at any of our classes, events and associated social activities (whether they have been organized directly by Jig and a Swig or informally through the community)

Harassment or bullying won't be tolerated and by attending any of our events in any capacity (whether you are a professional 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 have built a welcoming and supportive community, but we don't know everyone and, in a growing community, we may unfortunately get people who behave badly.

## **Code of Conduct**

### **1. There's room for all of us**

We welcome all dancers regardless of gender/gender identity, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, religion, age (18+) or employment status.

### **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.



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

Look out for each other. If you feel harassed or are made to feel uncomfortable please contact the teacher immediately. If you see someone who looks uncomfortable or upset, ask if they are ok and if they would like you to report any unwanted behavior to the teacher on their behalf. If you harass someone, you may be asked to leave. You may also be banned from other classes 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. Partner and group 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. This also applies to behaviour at social events organised by or through the Jig and a Swig community.

The **Equality Act of 2010** outlines the definition of sexual harassment under UK law and refers to 'unwanted conduct of a sexual nature'. This may include groping, physical contact/touching (ie. touching someone's knee or waist without consent) leering, sexual comments and indecent acts, amongst others. Jig and a Swig encourages everyone to report anything that makes them feel uncomfortable.

### **5. You can say no**

If the teacher has asked you to partner up or take part in a group dance and you do not want to, say "no thank you" – you don't need to offer an explanation. If you would not like to attend or take part in a social event associated with Jig and a Swig, say "no thank you" – you don't need to offer an explanation. If you would not like to accept the offer of an alcoholic beverage, say "no thank you" – you don't need to offer an explanation.



## 6. Be okay with people saying no

If you ask someone to dance they say no, respect their decision. 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. If you invite someone to a social event and they say no, respect their decision. If you offer someone an alcoholic beverage and they say no, respect their decision.

## 7. The 'Swig'

Jig and a Swig is a social Irish dance community. The 'swig' refers to the social element of having conversation, meet ups and building friendships within and outside of our Irish dance classes. There is zero expectation for anyone to consume alcohol and we fully support and celebrate anyone's choice not to consume alcohol, with no explanation required. Peer-pressure of any kind will not be accepted.

## Getting Help

- If you are injured and require medical attention or if you feel unsafe or threatened and would like to make the teacher aware of inappropriate behaviour, please let the teacher know you'd like to speak to them outside of the hall and they will listen and support you immediately.
- If you would like to make a complaint or pursue a concern, please contact Jessie [hello@jigandaswig.co.uk](mailto:hello@jigandaswig.co.uk). If Jessie considers the situation to be more serious than their experience can deal with, we 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 is to dial 999. You can also report a



crime online at any time via the **Met's website** in London and it can be at any time after the offence has happened. We will also anonymously report any incidents we consider to have broken the law to Crimestoppers as recommended to us by the London Metropolitan police.

- If you would like impartial advice, we recommend contacting a group such as **The Havens** who can advise you anonymously. The national helpline (0808 802 9999) for Rape Crisis England & Wales is open twice a day, everyday, though it can sometimes be difficult to get through. The team at **Good Night Out** have provided us a link to resources you might find useful and you can access them **here**.
- Thanks for reading this far, it shows us that you take these issues seriously. We will happily listen to any suggestions you have so we can continually improve and monitor this part of our community. There is nothing more important to us than ensuring our dancers feel safe and can love their dancing and the community of brilliant people.