

Press Release

- FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE -

British DanceSport Association Calls Out Inappropriate Behaviour in Dancing

The British DanceSport Association (BDSA) is taking a stand against inappropriate behaviour in the world of ballroom dancing and continues its mandate to succeed where others have failed.

As the governing body for dance sport in the UK with membership at a record high, we are committed to fostering an environment of respect, professionalism, and integrity. Recent incidents have again highlighted the need for a firm response to ensure the safety and well-being of all participants.

BDSA President, Marcus Hilton MBE states "The BDSA is deeply committed to maintaining the highest standards of conduct within our dance community."

Upon launch, the BDSA implemented a zero-tolerance policy towards any form of inappropriate behaviour, including but not limited to, harassment, bullying, and misconduct – the very essence of safeguarding. Our Safeguarding Policy applies to all members, dancers, volunteers, parents, coaches, judges, and associated personnel involved in BDSA-sanctioned events and activities. Central to this campaign the BDSA established a confidential reporting system for safeguarding purposes when it launched. We assure all participants that every report will be investigated seriously. We encourage anyone who experiences or witnesses inappropriate behaviour to report it immediately.

The BDSA is proud to have taken this approach in the dance world and continues to educate on the importance of its campaign Safer DanceSport.

To promote a culture of respect and understanding, the BDSA will launch a series of educational programs relating to its Code of Conduct focused on appropriate conduct, consent, and professional behaviour in dance sport. These programs will be available for all BDSA members and affiliates to complete within the first year of membership.

Any member found to violate the BDSA's Code of Conduct faces strict disciplinary action, which may include suspension, expulsion, retraction of a licence, and a ban from future competitions and events. The BDSA is dedicated to ensuring that the dance community becomes a safe and supportive space for everyone.

Ballroom without Boundaries, Classical without Compromise
Freestyle without Frontiers and Latin without Limitations.

Genevieve Gordon-Thomson, Chair of the BDSA, commented recently, "Creating a governing body from scratch has allowed for us to learn from other sports mistakes and develop prudent and effective governance that benefits those who chose to be governed by us. We want to work together to deliver the positive messages of dance but first, we have a lot of work to do to ensure a safe and effectively competitive environment.'

The BDSA urges all members of the dance sport community to join us in upholding appropriate standards and creating a respectful and inclusive environment for all.

Neil Harrison, CEO of the BDSA said "The beauty of ballroom dancing lies in the mutual respect and collaboration between partners. We do not tolerate any behaviour that undermines these core values. Our governance and policies are designed to safeguard the integrity of our sport and ensure a positive experience for all participants. Together, we can ensure that the art and sport of ballroom dancing continue to thrive in a setting that honours the dignity and well-being of every participant."

For more information, please visit our website at www.bdsassociation.com or contact our chair Genevieve Gordon-Thomson via her email (genevieve@bdsassociation.com).

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About the British DanceSport Association:

The British DanceSport Association (BDSA) is the national governing body for DanceSport in the United Kingdom. Our mission is to promote and develop ballroom dancing at all levels, from grassroots to elite competition, while ensuring a safe and inclusive environment for all participants.

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