

# PRESS RELEASE

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## Shifting Codes and Dreams

With over 200 people turning out to attend the black history extravaganza hosted by Westside Young Leaders Academy, it was a night not to be missed. The local community were out for an evening of edutainment in celebration of black history and the launch of self-published 13-year-old Elijah Frederick's children's fiction book, 'Shifted Code.'

Elijah's book comes at a time when the Centre for Literacy in Primary Education (CLiPE) has recently released the results of their 'Reflecting Realities' survey. The study looked at children's books published in the UK in 2017 to establish how many featured BAME (Black or Minority Ethnic) characters. The findings reported that there were 9115 children's books published in the UK in 2017 and of these only 391 featured BAME characters. Furthermore, only 1% of the children's books published in the UK in 2017 had a BAME main character.

"The fact that people were buying my book was the best feeling and I really do hope that I inspire other young people that have dreams and ambitions. If you put in the work a dream can become a reality." - Elijah Frederick, Young Author. As Elijah prepares for his first book signing at New Beacon Books, radio interviews and other visits during the half-term, he is encouraging children aged 8-11 years old to read and submit their reviews of 'Shifted Code'.

"As one of the very few remaining African & Caribbean specialist bookshops in the UK, it is vital that New Beacon Books supports young aspiring authors like Elijah to improve diversity in the literacy world. Black boys do read and WRITE and we commend Elijah for his vision and look forward to more books from him." - Vanessa La Rose, New Beacon Books

For the past 3 years Elijah has spent his spare time writing his story and creating the main character, Tadeo. Bullied by Nathan and his friends, Tadeo is a tormented genius who is isolated and excluded by everyone in his class. Through an unlucky pairing with the brawny Nathan, a victimized Tadeo has to deal with the misery of working with him on a computing project.

Before writing his book, Elijah was a junior blogger for the Obi & Titi series which also features BAME characters, a competition winner and contributor across a variety of publications. His love for writing prompted him to ask the creator of Obi & Titi, Oyehmi Begho, for guidance on how to publish his first book. Begho then mentored Elijah through the whole process.

"We remember reading one of Elijah's first pieces and thinking what a wide vocabulary he had for a young boy. It was only after working with him that we realised his creativity, imagination and passion were just as big and now it's great seeing him put them to use and inspiring others. We're very proud of this huge accomplishment which, we're sure, will be the first of many books from this talented young author." - Oyehmi Begho, Obi and Titi

Just before he announced the completion of his book, Elijah was awarded 'Mathematician of the Year' at Westside Young Leaders Academy and 'Most Improved Student' in his year group for English at his secondary school during the same week.

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We are honoured and proud to host the book launch of our young leader Elijah Frederick who has completed his first novel, 'Shifted Code'. Elijah is a shining example to us all and an inspiration to young people. He is a talented and gifted young man who is a credit to his parents. We have no doubt that this will be the first of many novels and we look forward to supporting Elijah on his journey to success and leadership." - David Okoro, Director, Westside Young Leaders Academy

With 'Shifted Code' now being stocked in book shops and purchases being made online from the Caribbean to the UK, this young author is set for a great future ahead and is one to watch.

Book Signing and Q&A: Thursday 25th October 2018 at New Beacon Books, 76 Stroud Green Road. N4 3EN To purchase tickets visit <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/black-history-month-book-launch-signing-shifted-code-by-13-year-old-elijah-frederick-tickets-50425809955>

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## NOTES TO EDITORS

For further information - Contact: Candice Bryan, Elijah Frederick Publicist Website: [www.elijahfrederick.com](http://www.elijahfrederick.com) Email: [candice@noirewellness.com](mailto:candice@noirewellness.com) Phone: 07930 637 902

Oyehmi Begho is the author of The Obi and Titi series. He has a BSc. in Computer Science and a Masters in the use of ICT in Education. He is an ex-teacher, IT Consultant, author and 3-D Animator, passionate about children, education and life-long learning. The Obi and Titi series is an endeavour close to the creator's heart, that challenges the growing cultural divide and he hopes it will give all children a better understanding of Africa, its people, culture and history. Contact: Oyehmi Begho, Author Email: [info@obiandtiti.com](mailto:info@obiandtiti.com) Website: [www.obiandtiti.com](http://www.obiandtiti.com)

Westside Young Leaders Academy (WYLA) have a dedicated team who are passionate about producing successful men who understand they are born to be GREAT! Providing a range of classes and opportunities designed to bring out this GREATNESS! Contact: David Okoro, Director Website: [www.wylauk.com](http://www.wylauk.com) Email: [david@davidokoroconsulting.co.uk](mailto:david@davidokoroconsulting.co.uk) Phone: 07779 411259.

New Beacon Books was founded in 1966 by John La Rose and his partner Sarah White and was the UK's first black publisher, specialist bookshop and international book distributor. For over 50 years New Beacon Books has made available to Britain and its communities fiction, non-fiction, history, poetry and children's books written by authors from Africa, the Caribbean, America, and Britain. Contact: Vanessa La Rose, Manager Website: [www.newbeaconbooks.com](http://www.newbeaconbooks.com) Email: [newbeaconbooksuk@gmail.com](mailto:newbeaconbooksuk@gmail.com) Phone: 020 7272 4889

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 **NEW BEACON BOOKS**

Meet the Young Author - Elijah Frederick



**Book Signing with Children's Q&A**

Thursday 25th October 2018, 2pm-4pm 76 Stroud Green Road London N4 3EN