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## Pupils turned away from World Cup

**Hundreds of schoolchildren are on their way home from Germany after falling foul of a World Cup fake ticket mix-up, BBC News has learned.**

The 381 children from schools across the UK left for Germany on Friday to watch Portugal play Iran on Saturday.

Parents were told they had match tickets as part of a £410-a-head tour.

PE teacher Rob Christopher, who organised the trip for children from Portchester School, Bournemouth, confirmed they had been turned away.

The party was due to catch a ferry back from Germany a day early, he added.

They were due to arrive back in the UK on Sunday night.

It is not yet known which other schools have been affected but it is thought the children are all aged 11 and over.

Headteacher of Portchester School, Chris Bradey, confirmed it had organised the trip for about 30 children.

He said: "The tickets had been sourced for them [the children] by the tour operator - and the tour operator has done nothing wrong - but let's just say the sourcing of the tickets proved to be of doubtful provenance."

He said they were "all in good spirits" despite their disappointment.

One parent whose son attends the Dorset school said the 11-year-old was "devastated".

She said parents had been told that their children were "to have been allocated a particular section of the stadium set aside for all the children involved, reassuring parents of any safety issues with fans.

"A teacher phoned me late last night to inform me they had been victims of a scam," she told the BBC News website.

**'Successful bid'**



The children thought they had tickets to watch Portugal play Iran

“ The children and parents are obviously very upset and can't understand why anyone would want to scam so many children ”

Parent

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"The children and parents are obviously very upset and can't understand why anyone would want to scam so many children."

The trip, which was also supposed to include a seven-a-side football tournament, had been planned by Portchester School since last November.

A letter to parents from Mr Christopher, dated 10 November, said he was "delighted to announce that we were successful in our bid to access tickets for the summer FIFA World Cup."

It adds: "Those involved in sport appreciate how difficult it is to purchase a ticket for the second largest sporting event in the world. So this is possibly a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity."

The letter asked for a £100 deposit to cover "Tour Company booking procedure".

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