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Ticket scam pupils back from game

A group of children who missed out on a World Cup match because of an alleged ticket scam, have returned home after watching England's victory in Germany.

The 23 pupils from Mayville High School in Portsmouth were among 400 youngsters caught up in the alleged fraud.

They all paid about £400 for their trip last weekend but the tickets they were promised never showed up.

Fifa came up with tickets after talks with the government and Portsmouth FC who paid the hotel and travel costs.

The pupils watched England win a place in the quarter-finals through a 1-0 victory over Ecuador at Stuttgart's Gottlieb-Daimler stadium on Sunday.

The boys, who are aged between 11 and 15, were met by parents and fellow pupils as they returned home on Monday morning after a 16-hour coach journey.

Martin Castle, deputy head teacher at Mayville, said: "The boys were absolutely speechless when we arrived in the stadium, I looked round and I saw 20-odd boys with eyes like saucers.

"I think for a while the boys just couldn't take it all in."

Oliver Hancock, 13, from Hayling Island, said: "It was brilliant, amazing. There was a great atmosphere in the stadium. It was really, really good, especially to see England win.

"After how disappointed we were last week it's hard to believe this would happen."

Schoolchildren from Worcestershire, Oxfordshire, Dorset, Lincolnshire and Suffolk were also affected by the alleged fraud.

Tickets have also been secured for the other children who are due to travel out to Germany on Saturday to watch the England v Portugal quarterfinal match.



The children returned to Germany to see England win



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Thames Valley Police said the deception being investigated involved a total sum of about £60,000 and that several lines of inquiry are being pursued.

A 38-year-old man and a woman in her 40s, both from Slough, Berkshire, were arrested on suspicion of deception and have been released on police bail.

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