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Blair to help World Cup victims



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Tony Blair has said the Government will try to get hundreds of schoolchildren who missed out on attending a World Cup match because of an alleged ticket scam, back to Germany.

Around 450 youngsters from across the country were refused entry when they went to watch Portugal play Iran on Friday in Frankfurt.

The match tickets were believed to be part of a £410-a-head tour.

"I don't know what exactly can be done but obviously for them it's terrible and it's something we need to

work on to make sure they can get out there," Mr Blair said as he co-hosted a fans' radio phone-in.

"Usually there is a very strict boundary (between sport and government) but on something like this we will try to do what we can to help."

A group of 23 boys from Mayville High School in Portsmouth, Hants, travelled to Cologne to see the Czech Republic v Ghana match at the weekend but were told by Activ4 that the tickets were not available.

They were then told to travel to Frankfurt for the Portugal v Iran match on Saturday, but before they departed they were told there were no tickets for this match either.

The young victims of the alleged scam, aged between 11 and 16, today returned home devastated at not seeing the match.

Mayville High School headteacher Linda Owens said: "The whole point of the trip was to see a World Cup match, to get the flavour of what it would be like, the excitement of it. But the boys have been amazingly good, despite how devastated they obviously are."

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