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ORDINGBRIDGE & VERWOOD Thursday, May 29, 2014

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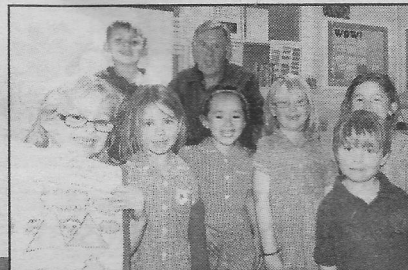
Verwood Town Council
poses mayor and deputy

NEWS: P4

Pen pals

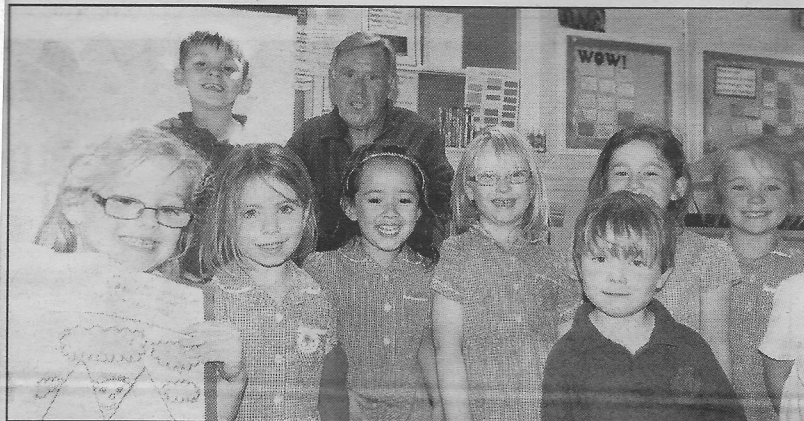
Hyde School pupils urged
to send letters to India

NEWS: P7



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THE JOURNAL, May 29, 2014 7



John Hunt from the Lotus Flower Trust talks to children at Hyde Primary about children in Ramagar.

Reaching out to India

By **Karen Bate**
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A PENSIONER who is transforming the lives of destitute children in India has encouraged pupils at Hyde Primary School to put pen to paper and send letters to the youngsters.

John Hunt, 73, from Hyde, has been changing the lives of some of the poorest children in rural India over the last four years. In that time he has helped create more than 20 schools and homes.

Now he is urging youngsters from Hyde School and the children from its twin school – the Janet Sheed Roberts (JSR) Special Needs School and Home in Ramnagar – to share their lives through letter writing.

Mr Hunt said: "Twinning Hyde with

Ramnagar helps enrich the children's lives and opens their eyes and minds to other lives and experiences. It is only through education that the kids in India have a chance to break out of the cycle of poverty."

Headteacher Julie Dalziell said: "The cultural and social awareness John's updates bring is a huge benefit to all the children and enhances the lovely family atmosphere we already cherish at the school."

Mr Hunt opened the JSR School with money raised by the Lotus Flower Trust – a charity he founded and runs from an office in his garden.

It has received funding from The Funding Network to build an anganwadi, (kindergarten) for pre-school children in Ladakh, in the Himalayas.

Mr Hunt wants to build a further 25. For details visit lotusflowertrust.org