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## Knife At Lunch Gets 10-Year-Old Girl Arrested At School

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**OCALA, Fla. --** A 10-year old Ocala girl brought her lunch to school and a small kitchen knife to cut it. She now faces a felony charge after being arrested. The school and the sheriff's office disagree on the reason for the arrest.

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School officials say the 5th grader was brown-bagging it. She brought a piece of steak for her lunch, but she also brought a steak knife. That's when deputies were called.

It happened in the cafeteria at Sunrise Elementary School. The 10-year-old used the knife to cut the meat.

"She did not use it inappropriately. She did not threaten anyone with it. She didn't pull it out and brandish it. Nothing of that nature," explained Marion County School Spokesman Kevin Christian.

But a couple of teachers took the utensil and called the sheriff. When deputies arrived, they were unable to get the child's parents on the phone, so they arrested her and took her to the county's juvenile assessment center.

"And we didn't handcuff her or treat her like a criminal. But, we took her to the assessment center to be assessed," said Capt. James Pogue, Marion County Sheriff's Office.

School officials said it doesn't matter what the knife was being used for. They said they had no choice.

"Anytime there's a weapon on campus, yes, we have to report it and we aggressively report it because we don't want to take any chances, regardless," Christian said.

But the sheriff's office said the extreme measures in what some may say was a harmless incident had to do with school policy, not theirs.

"But once we're notified, we have to take some type of action," Pogue explained.

The student now faces a felony charge for the possession of a weapon on school property and the principal suspended her for ten days. The parents of the girl could not be reached for comment.

The sheriff's office has turned the case over to the State Attorney's Office.

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